HELP BY THE WAY

A DAILY MONITOR

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BY

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WITH INTRODUCTION

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LONDON:

T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;

EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

1877.

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Introduction.

THERE may be some ground for the complaint, in the present day, that too many books are written *about* religion. But just as we may have too many "talkers about religion," but cannot possibly have too many "religious talkers," so we are not prepared to admit for one moment that this multiplicity of books proves that we can have too many *religious books*.

With this distinction in mind, since I can unhesitatingly recommend this "Manual" as "a religious book," I gladly accede to the request made to me by the author, who is personally unknown to me, to write a few words of prefatory introduction.

As the title indicates, it is designed to be a devotional companion; and it possesses one leading and distinctive feature, which, in my opinion, is likely to render it eminently useful. The art of questioning is brought to bear upon a daily text; and instead of the ordinary comment, which expresses the thoughts of another, the mind of the reader is made actively to grasp *its own* thoughts—practically applying the Scriptural truth to the individual heart and conscience.

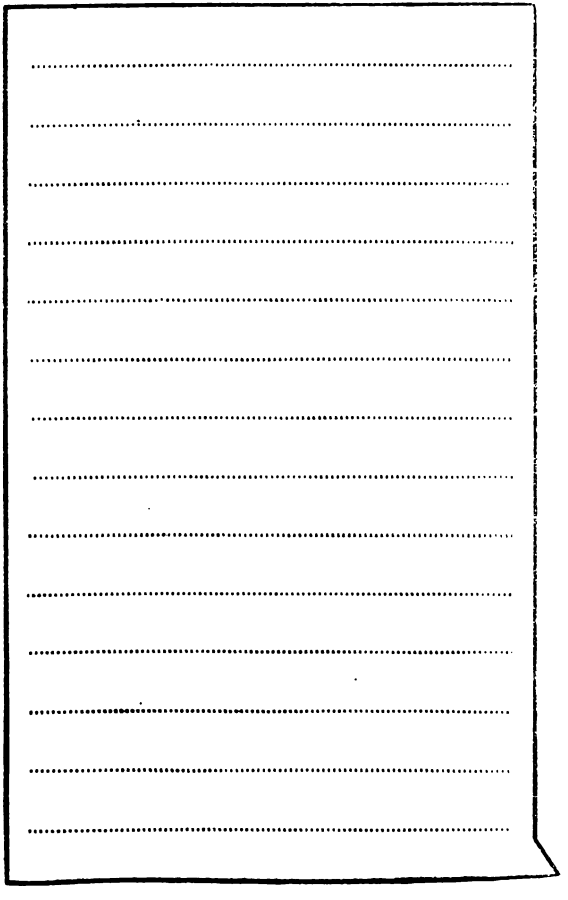
The advantages to be derived from such questionings are undoubtedly very great. Dr. Owen remarks, "More knowledge is ordinarily diffused, especially among the young, by one hour's catechetical exercise than by many hours' continued discourse." Mr. Charles of Bala declared, "Catechising children has taught me more divinity than any other human means." The well-known text, "Train up a child in the way he should go," stands in the marginal read-

ing, "*Catechise* a child in the way he should go." In the Scriptures, and especially in the teaching of our Lord, the appeal by questions is constant: "Where art thou?" (Gen. iii. 9); "Where is Abel thy brother?" (Gen. iv. 9); "What aileth thee, Hagar?" (Gen. xxi. 17); "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings xix. 9); "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Ps. cxvi. 12); "Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" (Matt. xxi. 31); "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" (Luke x. 36); "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" (Mark xi. 30).

The peculiar power over others which a well-directed and discriminating catechising thus secures, may be equally serviceable to ourselves. No better plan can possibly be adopted to increase our stores of ordinary knowledge, than the habit of asking ourselves questions on the various topics of interest which have been brought under our notice. And what is true of knowledge generally, is equally true of the most important kind of knowledge—the knowledge which is most difficult of attainment—SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

On this ground, more particularly, I believe this Manual will be found a real and practical "help by the way" by many a sincere pilgrim. The questions are not likely to "make the heart of the righteous sad" whom God "hath not made sad." They will in every case test the sincerity, the reality, of faith; but at the same time they will not *discourage* those who are constrained—and who is not constrained?—to lament their *weakness* of faith. They will teach the most advanced Christian the necessity of "pressing forward;" but they will not allow the humblest disciple to forget that God hath not "despised the day of small things"—that "a bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking [or dimly burning] flax shall He not quench."

CHARLES BULLOCK,
Editor of "Our Own Fireside."



HELP BY THE WAY.

January 1.

Search the Scriptures.—JOHN v. 39.

DO I follow my Saviour's command? What are my motives for searching the Scriptures? Do I commence the search with prayer? Do I prosecute it with humility? Do I seek with sincerity for the enlightenment of the Spirit, to enable me to search aright, to the salvation of my immortal soul, and not for the satisfying of a mere idle curiosity?

"As an ever-welling, overflowing fountain, into which the deeper you dig, the more you find it abound with water; in like manner are the Holy Scriptures: the more you search into the sacred volume, the fuller you will find are the veins of living water."—*Brentius.*

"The Bible is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit; a chart by which the Christian sails to eternity, the map by which he daily walks, the sun-dial by which he sets his life, the balance in which he weighs his actions."—*T. Watson.*

"We should read the Bible with all diligence, that, as being good exchangers, we may be able to know the true coin from that which is counterfeit."—*Jerome.*

"Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!
This book—this holy book—on every line
Marked with the seal of high Divinity,
On every leaf bedewed with drops of love
Divine; and with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamped
From first to last; this ray of sacred light,
This lamp, from off the everlasting throne
Mercy took down, and in the night of Time
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow;
And evermore beseeching men, with tears
And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live."—R. Pollok.

solely into, self's evil, instead
remedy provided for that evil? Am I
internal evidences of my acceptance w
seeking to establish some little righteou
before accepting my Saviour's simple r
lieve only"?

"Unbelief may, perhaps, tear the copi
which Christ hath given you; but He still
in heaven with Himself. Your doubts an
of the covenant; neither can they change
ford.

"The soul is the life of the body. Fait
soul. Christ is the life of faith."—*Flavel.*

"I owed thousands, and much mor
I did believe that I did nothing ov
And lived accordingly; my Credit
Believed so too, and lets me go."—

January 3.

Prepare to meet thy God.—AMOS

DO I realize that my soul must be
her God? Is that preparation
living for the future, or for the
my soul required of me this day, should I r
Father's messenger, or as an unpreparedness

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January 4.

Feed My sheep.—JOHN xxi. 16.

IS it my earnest and unceasing endeavour to impart of the treasures of my spiritual storehouse to the famishing souls around, who are ignorant of the rich and satisfying provision which the Saviour has furnished for them as well as for me? Are my words clothed with the spirit of meekness? Do my actions spring from a heart deeply imbued with the love of Christ? Is my manner in keeping with my teaching? Am I gentle, sympathizing, earnest, undaunted in the presence of sin—soothing in its hour of despair?

"Oh, how sweet to work all day for God, and lie down at night beneath His smile!"—*M'Cheyne.*

"Thy love
Shall chant itself thy own beatitudes,
After its own life-working. A child-kiss,
Set on thy sighing lips, shall make thee glad;
A poor man, served by thee, shall make thee rich;
A sick man, helped by thee, shall make thee strong:
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest."—*E. Browning.*

January 5.

Trust in Him at all times.—Ps. lxii. 8.

IS my trust in God as firm and unshaken in the time of trouble as in the time of peace? If not, why? Am I too much occupied in thinking over my present darkness and past sunshine! Contrasting one with the other, am I wondering why God has permitted it, instead of feeling thankful for the past, and, like the loving child of a loving Father, leaving the present with Him, content to trust the future to Him, though I cannot see?

"Put your confidence in God. Believe everything that He says in His word. Whether you understand it or not, have faith in Him that He means your good."—*Cecil.*

"Ye must learn to swim and hold up your head above the water, even when the sense of His presence is not with you to hold up your chin."—*Rutherford.*

"Oh, my spirit, be not faithless!
God delights to save;
Trust wakes love, and love is deathless,
E'en despite the grave."

January 6.

Repent.—MATT. iii. 2.

IS my soul convinced of sin? Has sin become hateful to me, not merely because of its consequences, but because each sin, each dereliction from the path of duty, is a stroke of pain to my long-suffering God, and crucifies my Saviour afresh? Does the sincerity of my repentance evince itself in the avoidance of those sins which before were a pleasure? Does the sight of sin in others give me pain? Do I try to lead them to repentance?

"The subject of true repentance is a convinced believing soul. An unconvinced sinner cannot be a true penitent; for what the eye sees not, the heart rues not."—*Baillie.*

"Since Christ looked upon me in conversion, my heart is not my own. He hath run away with it to heaven."—*Rutherford.*

"Life's waning hours, like the Sibyl's page,
As they lessen, in value rise:
Oh, rouse thee and live! nor deem man's age
Stands in the length of his pilgrimage,
But in days that are truly wise."

January 7.

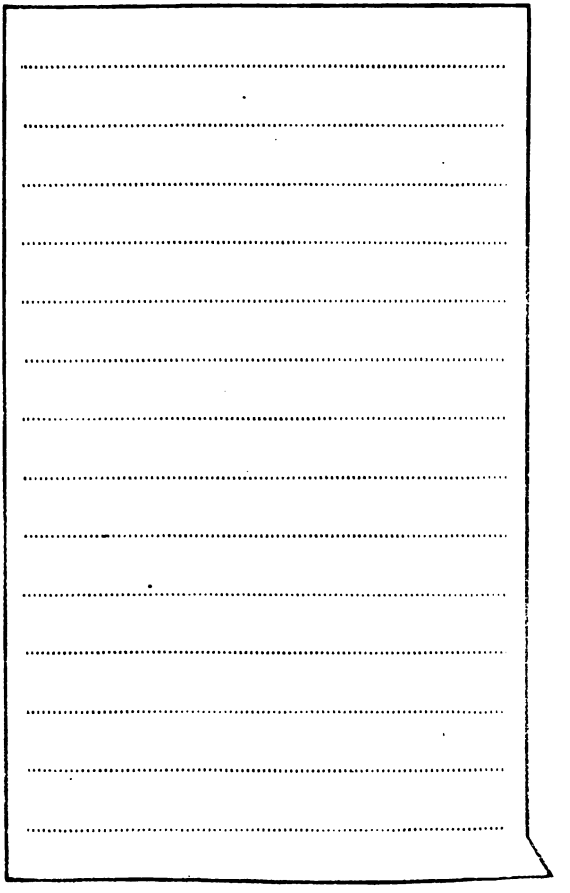
I lead in the way of righteousness.—PROV. viii. 20.

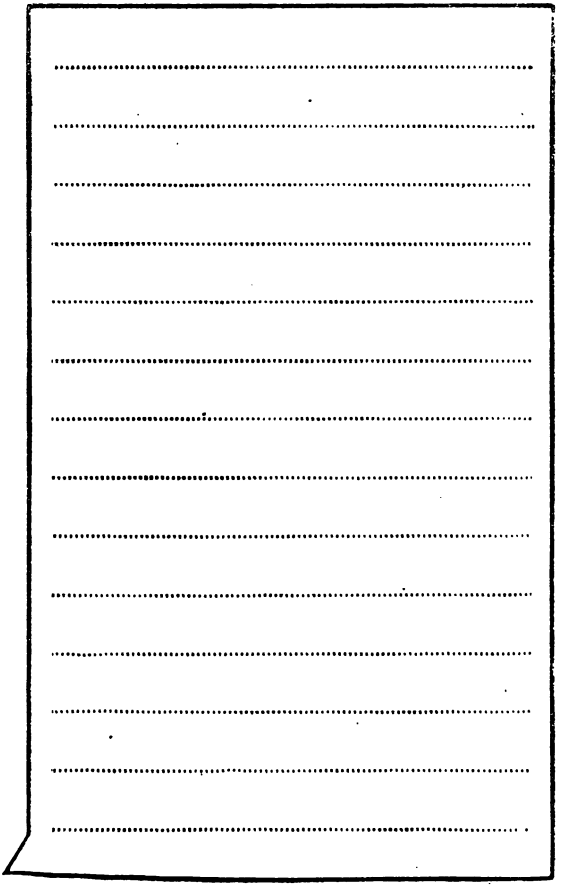
AM I willing to be *led* into the way of righteousness? Do I think to walk in that way through any knowledge of my own, or keep in its narrow paths through any efforts of mine? Do I feel thankful that I have a Divine and unerring Leader, who is not only willing but able to lead me into the way of righteousness? And do I show my thankfulness, by submitting to be led by Him as a little, unquestioning child, who feels it knows nothing?

"Thou wouldst willingly go to heaven; what better guide canst thou have than Him who dwells there? If He lead thee through deep sloughs and braky thickets, think that He knows this to be the nearer way, though more cumbersome."—*Bishop Hall.*

"God is fashioning the human heart for future joy. He only sounds a string here and there, to see how far His work has progressed."

"Teach me to live, Thy purpose to fulfil;
Bright for Thy glory let my taper shine;
Each day renew, remould this stubborn will;
Closer round *Thee* my heart's affections twine!"





January 8.

Commit thy works unto the Lord.—PROV. xvi. 3.

WHEN difficulties beset my path, do I take them to God, and ask Him to make it straight before me? Do I torment myself uselessly, as well as dishonour God, by endeavouring myself to find a way out of them, thereby practically distrusting God's promised help? Do I make it a point of asking His blessing before entering on any new work or undertaking?

"If the Lord careth for thee, be thyself at rest; for why should He care, and thou care too?"—*Leighton.*

"Oh, what folly to sit down and weep upon a decree of God? for who can come behind our Lord to alter what he hath decreed?"—*Rutherford.*

"Leave God to order all thy ways,
And hope in Him whate'er betide;
Thou'lt find Him in the evil days
Thy all-sufficient strength and guide;
Who trusts in God's unchanging love,
Builds on the rock that nought can move."—*Lyra Germanica.*

January 9.

The Lord heareth the prayer of the righteous.—PROV. xv. 29.

AM I one of those whose prayers the Lord promises to hear? Do I pray in faith, expecting an answer to my prayer? Do I pray in the spirit of submission, asking only that if my petitions be in accordance with God's will they may be granted? Do I pray in the firm assurance that God hears, and that He knows best whether that for which we pray would be good for us, or otherwise?

"Prayer diffuses itself in the soul as the quickening, invigorating principle of life, interfused with all our work, never impeding, but sweetly animating the spiritual life of the child of God.

"We often are as sad after prayer as we were before it, because our prayers are not the prayers of expecting faith. But prayer with real belief and hope, will enable us always to roll cares from ourselves upon the Lord."

"There is a God who heareth prayer
Both night and day;
Oh, pray to Him, pray everywhere,
And ever pray."

January 10.

The Lord trieth the hearts.—PROV. xvii. 3.

DO I realize that He who tries my heart is omniscient, knowing all things? Do I vainly imagine that in some heart-nook I may keep a cherished sin, be it great or small, hoping that it may escape the Almighty Searcher? Do I endeavour, in all my thoughts, words, and deeds, to remember that I am in the presence of Deity? Does this solemn truth keep me from sinning?

"God looks in an instant of time to things past, present, and future; but the knowledge of man reacheth only to a few things past and present, knowing nothing of things to come: that is God's peculiar so to do, and a piece of learning too high for man to attain to."—*Spencer.*

"Keep our hearts from doing hurt, and getting hurt; from being defiled by sin, and disturbed by trouble; keep out bad thoughts, and keep up good thoughts."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Thou Lord of mercy and of might,
My trembling heart behold,
And give Thy Spirit's living light
To search its inmost fold."

January 11.

Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.
PROV. xxviii. 13.

HAVE I forsaken the sins that I have confessed? Have I felt my need of pardon and forgiveness? Have I come to God for mercy, pleading His precious promises, and asking Him for strength to keep my new resolutions? Do I pray with earnestness for the promised heart of flesh?

"If thy heart hath been broken for and from sin, thou mayest not only plead God's mercy, but His justice for the pardoning of thy sin. Show Him His hand and seal; He cannot deny Himself."—*Watson.*

"Poor child of sin and woe,
Now listen to thy Father's pleading voice;
No longer need'st thou go
Without a friend to bid thy heart rejoice.
"Oh, canst thou turn away?
It is thy Father that invites thee near!
Nay, sinner, weep and pray,
And Heaven shall hail the penitential tear!"—*Morris.*

January 12.

Lord, remember me.—LUKE xxiii. 42.

DOES this prayer re-echo the desires of my heart? Is it my desire that the Lord should remember me, and keep me in the midst of temptation? Do I desire that He may remember me in the hour of death? Am I remembering Him now when in health and strength?

"I feel more sure than ever that the right thing is to take each sin, the moment the conscience feels it, to the blood of Jesus, and there having once purged it, remember it no more."

"I must not mince my sins, and make little of them. When a soul groans beneath their burden, and cries unto God in the name of Jesus, 'O Lord, I am a sinner; and if Thou castest me into hell, as Thou justly mayest, I shall receive but my due,' then God heareth."—*Archbishop Usher.*

"My suffering, slain, and risen Lord,
In sore distress I turn to Thee;
I claim acceptance on Thy word,
My God, my God, forsake not me."—*Montgomery.*

January 13.

Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.—JER. xxix. 13.

AM I seeking for God with all my heart? Do I seek for God in His Word, in prayer, in His ordinances? Is it my sincere and earnest desire that the Lord should no longer be a stranger to my heart? Am I willing to give up those things which are displeasing to God? Does my desire to find God exceed in earnestness any earthly longings? Do I still search, though I do not find at once?

"Promises are given, not to supersede, but to quicken and encourage prayer; and when deliverance is coming, we must by prayer go forth to meet it. In seeking God, we must search for Him, continue seeking, and take pains in seeking; and this we must do with our whole heart, in sincerity and truth."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Thy mercy gates are open wide
To them that mourn their sin;
Oh, shut them not against us, Lord,
But let us enter in."—*J. Mardley.*

January 14.

Continuing instant in prayer.—Rom. xii. 12.

ARE my prayers the utterance of my heart's desires? Do I pray as if I felt the need of what I ask? Are my prayers formal, cold, merely the result of habit or of necessity? When my prayers are unanswered, do I give up praying? Are my prayers the result of belief in God's promises?

"We know that the infinite God cannot be moved or actually drawn nearer to us by prayer; but prayer draws the Christian nearer to God. The more frequently we pray, the nearer we bring ourselves to God."

"Prayer is the bow, the promise is the arrow; faith is the hand which draws the bow, and sends the arrow with the heart's message to heaven. Neither the promise without prayer, nor prayer without the promise, nor both without faith, avail the Christian anything."—*Salter.*

"Fervent or cold in voice or heart,
Still persevere;
Till every sin and grief depart,
And every fear."

January 15.

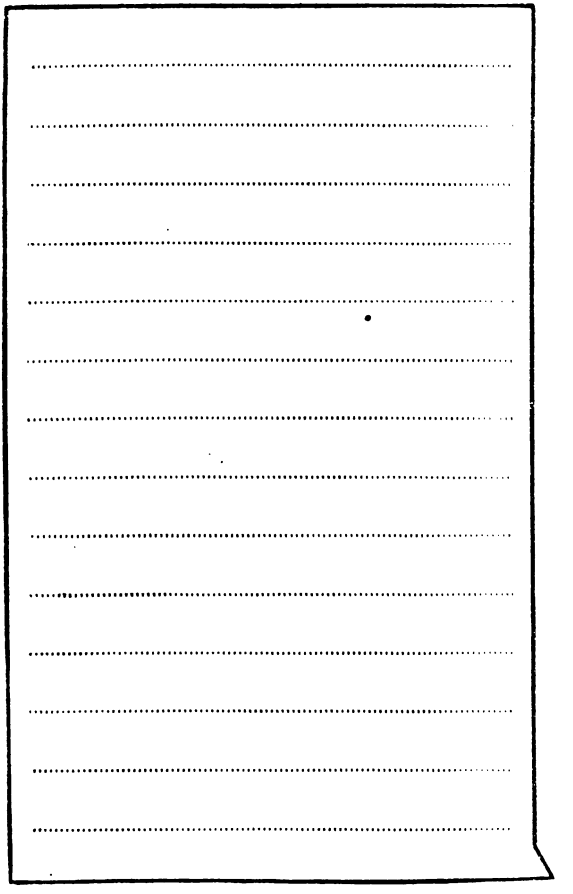
The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him.—Lam. iii. 24.

DOES my faith enable me to take to myself the great comfort of believing that the Lord is my portion, my resting-place in the midst of this world's storms and tempests? Do I rejoice in that comfort? Does it help me to bear the present with patient cheerfulness, and look onwards and upwards with hope?

"There may be joy without faith, and there may be faith without joy;....a constant faith begets a constant peace." —*Mason.*

"Faith brings us near to God, because it believes God's testimony that Christ hath for ever put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and hath taken out of the way everything that was in our way to God."

"The heart that trusts, for ever sings,
And feels as light as it had wings;
A well of peace within it springs:
Come good or ill,
Whate'er to-day, to-morrow brings,
It is His will."



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January 16.

Cast down, but not destroyed.—2 Cor. iv. 9.

IS my soul cast down because of temptation? Am I forgetting that God will not suffer me to be tempted above that I am able to bear? Is trouble pressing me down? Am I losing sight of the comforting truth, that my Father knows it, regulates it, and is with me, though I may not be able to realise it? Am I forgetting to look for the bright side, which is to the darkest of God's providences?

"There is a dark and bright side to every providence, as there was to the guiding pillar-cloud. *Nature* fixes on the dark, and calls it sorrow; *faith* sees the sun dispersing the darkness, and calls it by a name of joy."—*Bonar.*

"Whatever condition the children of God may be in in this world, they have a 'but not' to comfort themselves with."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Trust no future, howe'er pleasant;
Let the dead past bury its dead;
Act, act in the living present,
Heart within, and God o'erhead."

January 17.

God comforteth those that are cast down.—2 Cor. vii. 6.

AM I looking to God alone for the comfort He promises? Do I permit myself to seek for comfort otherwise than from God? Do I seek to realize, that as my Father knows best what is for my good, therefore there must be a "needs be" for all? Do I go to my heavenly Father for comfort, as I would to an earthly friend, firm in the consolatory belief that He is not only willing, but able to give me comfort? Am I inclined to rest too exclusively in earthly comfort and comforters?

"If God be our Father—if we know it and realize it—we shall be content to let the vessel of our life drift where it will; if eternal love guide the helm, it cannot fail to fall upon the right track."

"The child leans on its parent's breast,
Leaves there its cares, and is at rest
The bird sits singing by his nest,
And tells aloud
His trust in God, and thus is blest
'Neath every cloud."

January 20.

Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.
ZECH. ix. 12.

DOES the feeling of sin press me down? Am I allowing the sense of sin to occupy my thoughts solely, instead of turning to Christ the stronghold? Have I turned to Jesus in faith? Do I sufficiently realize that He is the stronger, who will not suffer Satan to be triumphant? Do I remember that the same loving, watchful Saviour, who when on earth prayed for His tempted follower, and prevailed, is now in heaven praying for me—powerful as then to deliver?

"There is no condition so low but we may have hope, and none so high as to be out of the reach of fear."

"Heaven's gates are wide enough to admit of many sinners, but too narrow to admit of any sin."—*Howels.*

"Venture on Him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."—*Hart.*

January 21.

Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.
1 PETER v. 7.

DO I obey the Lord's command of love to cast *all* my care upon Him? Do I feel unable to do this? Is it because I like to keep a part of my care to bear myself? Am I not liable to nurse my little troubles until they magnify themselves into great ones? Is that casting all my care upon Him? Is it not a practical disbelief of God's ability and willingness, when I refuse to part with *all* my care? Can I then expect help? Do I ask for grace to be enabled to take God unhesitatingly at His word?

"Commit thy trifles unto God, for to Him is nothing trivial."—*Tupper.*

"He who will watch Providence, will never want a providence to watch."

"Who would be God's, must trust, not see;
Not murmur, fear, demand;
Must wholly by Him guided be,
Lost in that loving hand;
Must turn where'er He leads, nor say,
Whither, O whither, points the way?"—German.

January 22.

The Lord will not cast off His people.—Ps. xciv. 14.

WHEN Satan clamours for my soul, when temptations seem to claim me as their prey, do I strengthen myself with the knowledge that the Lord will not cast me off? Do I remember that, though the Lord hates the sin, yet He loves the sinner; and that, while He casts the sin behind His back, He takes the repentant sinner to His arms of love? Am I willing to give myself up to the Lord, and thereby experience the inexpressible comfort of the unfailing protection of my heavenly Father?

"A soul may fall from the comforts of grace, but not from the habits of grace. A child of God may be cast down, but he cannot be cast off."—*Charnock.*

"A child of God may fall very low, but he can never fall below the promises."

"Prostrate before the mercy-seat,
I dare not, if I would, despair;
None ever perished at His feet,
And I will lie for ever there."—*Montgomery.*

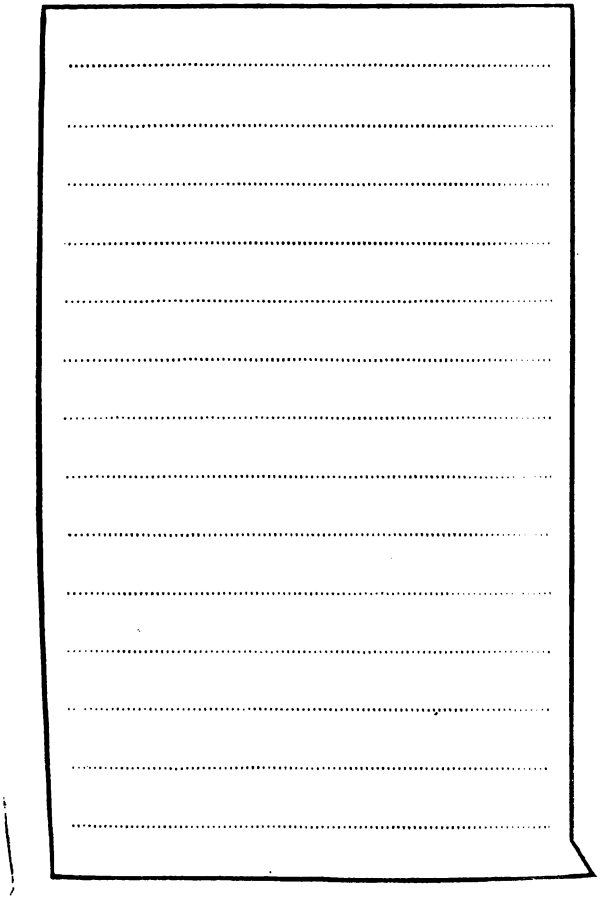
January 23.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.—Isa. ii. 5.

DO I make real and diligent use of the lights which God has given to enable me to pass in safety through the spiritual darkness of this world to the realms of light? Do I walk circumspectly in the light of that revealed knowledge? Do I seek to make others partakers of my light? Do I feel grateful for my many privileges? Does my gratitude evince itself in a life of cheerful activity and usefulness?

"Christians! it is your duty not only to be good, but to shine; and of all the lights which you kindle on the face, joy will reach furthest out to sea, where troubled mariners are seeking the shore. Even in your deepest griefs rejoice in God. As waves phosphoresce, let joys flash from the swing of the sorrows of your souls."—*Beecher.*

"Bright out of present darkness light shall shine,
And out of present sorrows joy shall rise;
Oh, trust we then the guardian hand Divine!
Nor marvel if our God, supremely wise,
Choose a rough path to lead us to the skies."



January 24.

The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.—Ps. xviii. 28.

AM I thinking too much of, and leaning too heavily on, earthly teachers and teaching, instead of going straight to Him who is the Sun of Righteousness? Am I forgetting that while He, the Light of the world, cannot err, the best earthly helps are fallible, and at best but reflections of their mighty original? Am I looking most at God's light, or at my own darkness? Do I realize that the light of God is sufficient to irradiate the deepest mental darkness?

"We may read many truths in the Bible, but we cannot know them savingly until God shine into our hearts."

"Let Christ be to you *really* the Son of God, the Saviour, and His light will dispel the darkness, and His Spirit lead you into all truth."—*D'Aubigné.*

"Father! O Father! though the way is black,
Keep me still nigh, and guide me on to Thee.
Oft I am falling, for the untrodden track
Is rough, and full of stones that weary me."

January 25.

In the day of adversity consider.—Eccles. vii. 14.

WHEN trouble comes, does it effect its appointed work in my soul, making me feel that it has been sent for some good end? Do I realize that if trouble does not sanctify, it hardens, thereby rendering its appointed work nugatory? Does the remembrance that it comes from the hand of an unerring Father, whose purpose must be right, help to quell the murmuring thought? When my plans and hopes are frustrated, do I bear in mind that all has been preordained in the eternal counsels, and that my soul's salvation and God's glory are the ends to be thereby gained?

"Times of general calamity and confusion have ever been productive of the greatest minds. The purest ore is produced from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt is elicited from the darkest storm."—*Cotton.*

"Adversity, sage, useful guest,
Severe instructor, but the best,
It is from thee alone we know
Justly to value things below."—*Somerville.*

January 26.

A Christian.—1 Peter iv. 16.

CAN I call myself a Christian in very deed? Am I a decided and unshrinking follower of my Divine Master? Does my Christianity stand as firm in storm as in sunshine? Am I Christ-like in my endeavours to do good? Am I Christ-like in my temper? Does my Christianity spread a hallowed influence around? Can the world see and say that I am of Christ?

"A Christian is one who is decided in his devotedness to God—painstaking in his search for truth—strong in benevolent purpose and holy endeavour—wielding a blessed influence—failing oft, and ceasing never—one of whom in death it can be said, 'He, being dead, yet speaketh.'"—*Kinshon.*

"Rests secure the righteous man,
At his Redeemer's beck;
Sure to emerge and rise again,
And mount above the wreck.

"Lo! the heavenly spirit towers
Like flame o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire."

January 27.

At evening time it shall be light.—Zech. xiv. 7.

DOES the blessed assurance that trouble will have an end give me comfort? When I feel impatient, would it not be better for me to think of my Saviour's sufferings, and perfect submission, than to dwell continually on the depth of my sufferings? When compared with the Saviour's, are not my troubles as nothing, since He, the sinless, suffered for sinners, whereas I am full of sin, and without the salutary uses of trouble could not be made fit to dwell hereafter in the land where sorrow is not?

"The Christian cannot be always upon the mount. There is a 'need be' that the light of glory should not dazzle our weak eyes."

"Our little inch of time-suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome home to heaven."—*Rutherford.*

"Break through the brambles and briers that beset thee,
Dread not the gloom and the blackness of night;
Lean on the hand that will safely conduct thee,
Trust to His eye to whom darkness is light."

January 28.

The entrance of thy words giveth light.—Ps. cxix. 130.

DO I make God's holy Word my life's study; or do I regard the reading of it merely as a duty, a thing that must be done, lest punishment might otherwise follow? Do I feel that my heavenly Father speaks to me personally through His Word? Is it my earnest prayer, and heartfelt desire, that the knowledge of the Scriptures should enter into my heart, as well as into my head?

"I can do nothing without the Spirit's eyes, but in a mist, as it were."—*Adams.*

"Strive to make prayer, and reading, and holy company your delight; and when delight cometh in, ye shall, by little and little, smell the sweetness of Christ, till at length your soul be filled with Christ's sweetness."—*Rutherford.*

"My soul is dark,
And without Thee,
My God! my light!
I cannot see."—*Hatch.*

January 29.

My strength is made perfect in weakness.—2 Cor. xii. 9.

DO I realize, as I ought, that I am nothing in myself? Feeling this sad but important truth, do I look to my all-sufficient Saviour for strength in the hour of weakness; strength to follow in the path of duty; strength to believe that I am nothing, unable to think one good thought; strength to be able to take Him at His word, and accept His strength as my strength?

"Often the Christian, while gathering a few flowers from the world, suffers his God to be at a distance from him; but the moment he perceives he is alone, he runs to reach his Father, Friend, and best Protector."—*Rowland Hill.*

"This land, through which His pilgrims go,
Is desolate and dry;
But streams of grace from Him o'erflow,
Their thirst to satisfy.

"When troubles, like a burning sun,
Beat heavy on their head,
To this almighty Rock they run,
And find a pleasing shade."

January 30.

Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.—Isa. xxvii. 5.

AM I at peace with my God? Is it possible for me to be at peace until this most important question is answered to the satisfaction of my immortal soul? Is it my earnest desire to be at peace with God? Am I prepared to give those things up which are the cause of warfare between my soul and its Creator? Do I put far away all idea of my own worthiness and strength?

"There is not an experience in life by whose side God has not fixed a promise. There is not a trouble so deep and swift-running that we may not cross safely over, if we have courage to steer and strength to pull."—*Beecher.*

"Every promise is a staff—able, if we have faith to lean upon it, to bear our whole weight of sin, and care, and trouble."—*Rev. C. Bridges.*

"A mind at perfect peace with God,—
Oh, what a word is this!
A sinner reconciled through blood,—
This, this indeed is peace."

January 31.

As thy days, so shall thy strength be.—Deut. xxxiii. 25.

HAS God appointed me a work to do which seems to me more than I can perform? Do I take to myself the full benefit of this gracious promise of strength when the time comes, not before? Am I not liable to forget that He who has promised is God, that He is able to fulfil His promises, and is never backward in their realization if we only have faith to take Him at His word?

"Oh, how sweet a thing were it for us to learn to make our burdens light, by framing our hearts to the burden, and making our Lord's will a law!"—*Rutherford.*

"God never wounds with both hands; he ever reserves one with which to bind up and to heal."

"O fellow-Christian! whosoe'er thou art,
This is for thee and me—
This wine of trust, that maketh glad the heart
In its adversity:
Drink, therefore, and so bear a braver part;
For as thy days, thy strength shall be."

February 1.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.
PHIL. iv. 13.

DO I realize as I ought the ever-present sustaining strength of my gracious Saviour, which is promised for all things, great and small? Do I seek by prayer to comprehend more practically my own utter nothingness? Do I seek to set forth the Saviour's strength, or my own? Am I anxious to use the strength He gives me for Him? What can I do for my Saviour to-day? Do I watch for opportunities for doing good?

"If you carry the talisman of Christ in your heart, it will give you strength and courage in every conflict, and at death open to you the gates of glory."—*Beecher.*

"Learn to believe Christ better than His strokes; Himself and His promises better than His glooms."—*Rutherford.*

"Thy grace sustains my spirit now,
Though still a pilgrim here below;
That grace suffices, comforts, guides,
Upholds, defends, preserves, provides."

February 2.

He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.—DEUT. xxxi. 6.

DO I not often provoke my God to forsake me by my grievous departures from Him? and yet I expect that He will not fail me. Would I deal thus with an earthly friend? Then how can I be so ungrateful to Him who has done for me more than all the world beside? Though I cannot always realize my Father's presence, do I remember that the fault is not in Him, but in myself? Is it my constant prayer that I may be enabled more and more to draw still deeper from His unfailing fulness? Do I point the weary and heavy-laden to the fulness of this precious promise?

"Those who are the subjects of Christ's love He will never leave; for He pardoned them when they were enemies, and He will not leave them now they are His friends."—*Charnock.*

"Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into His hands,
To His sure truth and tender care
Who earth and heaven commands."

February 3.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.—2 Cor. iii. 5.

WHEN, through God's grace, I have been enabled to conquer a temptation, to subdue some selfish inclination, or to do something for the glory of God, have I given "honour to whom honour is due"? Can I say with truth that there was no lurking feeling of self-complacency, no self-righteous commendation? Did I render thanks to my God for the greatness of His sufficiency, which was present when I needed it?

"Such is our weakness, that we cannot of ourselves think a good thought, much less raise good thoughts or affections in others. Our hands are not sufficient for us, but our sufficiency is of God, and His grace is sufficient to furnish us to every good thought and deed."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."—*Hart.*

February 4.

Set your affection on things above.—Col. iii. 2.

WHERE is my affection set? Do I sit loose to the things of this life? Am I living for this world, or for the next? What is there to make me place my affection here? What is there not there? Is not my home there, my treasure there; do I not hope to be there for ever with my Saviour? Is there anything earthly which interposes between my soul and my Creator?

"To be crucified to the world is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be; how heavenly a thing is it to be deaf and dead to this world's sweetest music! Lose not sight of Christ in this cloudy and dark day; learn not from the world to serve Christ, but ask Himself the way: the world is a false copy, and a deceitful guide to follow."—*Rutherford.*

"Whatever passes as a cloud between
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,
Causing that brighter world to disappear,
To seem less lovely, and its hopes less clear—
That is our world, our idol, though it bear
Affection's impress, or devotion's air."—*Keble.*

February 7.

Give me thine heart.—Prov. xxiii. 26.

AM I willing that God should reign in my heart alone? Is there a scarcely-acknowledged feeling on my part that I would like to keep a small portion of my heart at my own disposition? Is there any object or thing which comes between my heart and its allegiance to its Creator? Is the world holding a first place in my affections? Do I remember that, as I am "bought with a price," I am not my own, but God's?

"The greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God; and the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God."—*Flavel.*

"The heart is that which the great God requires and calls for from every one of us: whatever we give, if we do not give him our hearts, it will not be accepted."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Too much to Thee I cannot give;
Too much I cannot do for Thee;
Let all Thy love, and all Thy grief,
Graven on my heart for ever be."

February 8.

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently.
Deut. iv. 9.

DO I keep out of the way of temptation? Do I remember that it is only when I am in the way of duty that I can expect God's preserving power in the hour of temptation? Do I make diligent use of the means given for keeping my soul in the narrow path? Am I careful to avoid giving cause to the enemy to blaspheme?

"Those that would be religious must be very cautious, and walk circumspectly. Considering how many temptations we are compassed about with, and what corrupt inclinations we have within, we have great need to look about us, and to keep our hearts with all diligence."

"Against this heart's presumptuous sins,
I fly to faith and prayer;
But where the tempter's art begins,
Oh, save me, save me there!

Teach me to shun the first dark thought,
The wandering of the will;
Oh, keep the soul Thy blood has bought,
And let me serve Thee still!"

February 9.

***Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*—MATT. xi. 28.**

DO I feel sin to be a heavy burden? Am I not only convinced of sin, but truly sorry for it? Am I weary of the service of the world? Do I pant for rest? Have I come to Jesus, renouncing all those things which are in opposition to Him? Have I come to Him as my great Physician, willing to be saved in His way, as He thinks best? Have I come to Him as my Ruler, willing to submit to His yoke of love? Have I cast my burden on Him?

"If joy be exulting, peace is joy reposing. It is love in the green pastures, and beside the still waters."—*P. Hamilton.*

"If ye never had a sick night and a pained soul for sin, ye have not yet lighted upon Christ."—*Rutherford.*

"O Saviour dear, one gift bestow—
That simple faith, by which my heart may rest
In childlike confidence upon Thy breast,
Not seeking, but reposing in Thy love;
Then shall I fear no sorrow here below,
Knowing that all my joy is safe with Thee above."—*Parry.*

February 10.

***Be sober, be vigilant.*—1 PETER v. 8.**

DO I remember that the tempter can disguise himself as an angel of light? Am I ever tempted to do evil that good may come? Is it my earnest endeavour to warn others against the various and most specious forms under which temptation may assail them? Do I pray for personal watchfulness?

"No man can ever become eminent in anything unless he work at it with an earnestness bordering upon enthusiasm."—*Hall.*

"Idleness is the very rust and canker of the soul; the Devil's cushion, pillow, chief reposal; his very tide-time of temptation, as it were, wherein he carries with much care, and without contradiction, the current of our corrupt affections to any cursed sin."—*Bolton.*

"Awake, awake! pursue thy way
With steady course, while yet 'tis day;
While thou art sleeping on the ground
Danger and darkness gather round—
Haste, traveller, haste!"—*Colliger.*

February 11.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.
Heb. x. 22.

HAVE I taken advantage of the opened door of access to my God, and gone to Him in faith to claim His promised acceptance through Jesus my Saviour? Do I draw near to God in a holy life and conversation? Do I draw near with an earnest, striving heart? Has my faith grown up to the full persuasion that when I come to God, through Jesus Christ, I shall have pardon and acceptance? Have I that full assurance of faith which, taking the Saviour at His word, finds comfort in His promises?

"Faith makes invisible things visible, absent things present, things that are far off to be very near unto the soul." —*Brooks.*

"Faith apprehends pardon, but never pays a penny for it."—*Rutherford.*

"Be trustful, be steadfast, whatever betide thee,
Only one thing do thou ask of the Lord—
Grace to go forward wherever He guide thee,
Simply believing the truth of His word."

February 12.

Walk worthy of God.—1 Thess. ii. 12.

IS my walk on earth worthy of my high and holy calling? Do I remember that if I do not walk worthily of my calling here, I cannot hope to be for ever with the Lord? Do I endeavour in my different relations of life to imitate my blessed Master? Do I realize sufficiently that as heaven and happiness are my hoped-for end, so holiness must be the way to that desired end? Am I willing to give up all and everything which might be calculated to make my walk with God unworthy?

"Grace is of a stirring nature. It will show itself in holiness and good works: it will walk with you and talk with you, in all places and companies; it will buy with you and sell with you, and have a hand with you in all your actions."

"Oh, that our thoughts so heavenly were,
Our hearts to Christ so fully given,
That all our toils, and loves, and cares,
Might only lead us nearer there,
Where He is set in heaven!"

February 13.

Glorify ye the Lord in the fires.—ISA. xxiv. 15.

WHEN the fires of affliction scorch my inmost soul, do I glorify my God in the midst? Does my patience under tribulation beam forth to the glory of God? Am I able to glorify Him by a spirit of thankfulness for the comforts He has left, and of submission for those which He has seen fit in His inscrutable wisdom to remove from me?

"Afflictions are blessings to us when we can bless God for afflictions. God had one Son without sin, but He never had any without sorrow."—*Dyer.*

"Faith must be tried before it will come out precious, as gold does out of the fire."—*Hill.*

"Hold fast Christ, but take His cross and Himself cheerfully: Christ and His cross are not separable in this life, however they part at heaven's door."—*Rutherford.*

"Would not thy sorest tribulations prove
Their own best recompense, if, through the years
Of never-ending bliss, one voice were heard
To own that these, thy sorrows sanctified,
Had proved the means of leading it to heaven?"—*Macduff.*

February 14.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.—PHIL. ii. 4.

DO I come out of myself, and, forgetting for a little my own individual matters, interest myself for others? With what spirit do I seek to interest myself; of censoriousness, curiosity, or of Christian sympathy and benevolence? Do I seek for little, unnoticed opportunities of doing a kind act, or speaking a kind word, or giving a kind look to those with whom I come in contact?

"Selfishness withers and dies at the foot of Calvary's blood-stained mount."

"If I could but be master of that house-doll, myself—my own mind, my own wit, credit, and ease—how blessed were I! Alas! we have more need to be redeemed from *ourselves*, than from the devil and the world."—*Rutherford.*

"Each be the other's care
Here, and above
We shall be Jesu's,
For Jesus is love."

February 15.

He that is not with Me is against Me.—LUKE xi. 23.

DO I take my stand as one of my Saviour's followers, or do I seek to temporize with the world—trying to serve two masters? Do I enter into the full meaning of the Saviour's "against me"? Can I feel happy until I have decided with myself whether I am with Jesus or against Him? Shall I not pray with daily increasing earnestness for strength of mind and principle to take my stand for Christ?

"If Christ would make thy sins as the latch to open the door and let Himself in, take care that thou dost not make them a bolt to shut Him out."

"Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness. Necessity should not blush to beg. You are in the utmost need of Christ; therefore knock and cry."—*Rutherford.*

"If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned, to-day, the voice Divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin—
Let him no more lie down in sin."—*Keble.*

February 16.

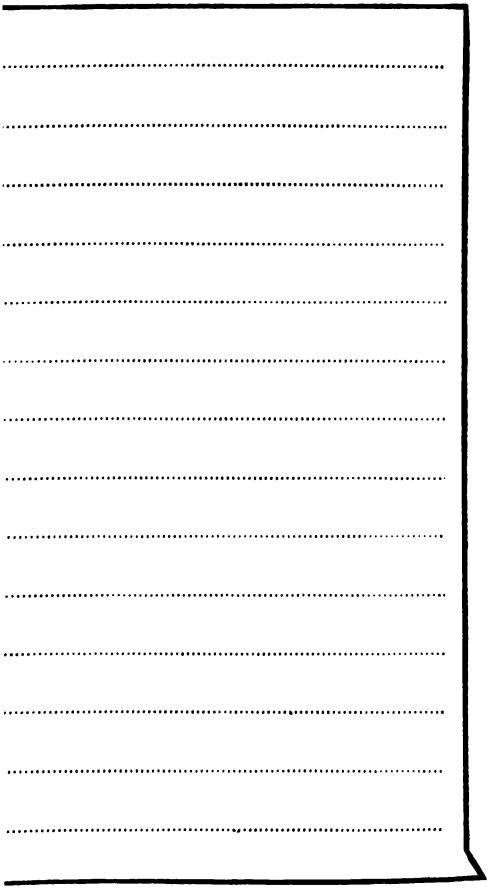
If ye love Me, keep My commandments.—JOHN xiv. 15.

DOES my love to my Saviour show itself in constant obedience to His commands? Have I learned from this Divine command that comfort is only to be found in the way of duty? When my path is beset with difficulties, do I endeavour to make my care for the *duties* of the day swallow up my anxiety about the probable *events* of the day? If I expect the comfort of the Spirit, must I not follow the leading of the Spirit?

"If I have faith in Christ, I shall love Him; if I love Him, I shall keep His commandments."

"It is but a small thing to see Christ in a book, as men see the world in a map; but to come near to Christ, to love Him and embrace Him, is quite another thing."—*Rutherford.*

"Dole not thy duties out to God,
But let thy hand be free;
The precious blood of Jesus Christ,
How was it dealt to thee?"



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February 17.

the Lord thy God with all thy heart.—DEUT. x. 12.

) I delight in meditating on God, and in holding communion with Him? Do I fear Him as a great God? Do I love Him as a good God, as my Father ighty Benefactor? Do I walk in those ways most to Him? Do I serve Him with all my heart and soul, ; myself to His honour, laying myself out for the nent of His kingdom among men, and what I do performing it cheerfully and with an undivided

gion consists not so much in joyful feelings, as in tant exercise of devotedness to God, and in laying elves for the good of others."—*Stewart.*

"When one that holds communion with the skies
Has filled his urn where those pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied."—*Cowper.*

February 18.

e first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.
MATT. vi. 33.

3 it my earnest endeavour to keep the things of this world in subordination to the interests of my undying soul? To what purpose am I living—what [striving to attain? Do I realize that unless I am upon with my Saviour's righteousness, I cannot r an entrance into His kingdom? Do I feel dis- i with my strivings after heavenly things?—still ot forget that God accepts the sincere seeking and est endeavour.

d your nest on no tree here; for you see God hath) forest to Death, and every tree upon which we est is ready to be cut down, to the end that we may mount up and build upon the Rock."—*Rutherford.*

"I thank Thee *more* that all our joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours,
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be our guide,
And not our chain."—*A. A. Proctor.*

February 19.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.
ACTS xvi. 31.

DO I accept with thankful, unquestioning belief, the record which God has given in the gospel concerning Jesus the Redeemer? Have I submitted myself to my Saviour, to be ruled, taught, and saved by Him, as He thinks best? Do I believe and accept this as the one and only way of salvation? Do I rejoice in the sense of salvation?

"The way to have a strong faith is to think nothing of yourself."—*Dr. Gordon.*

"Faith is nothing else but the soul's venture: it ventures to Christ in opposition to legal terrors; it ventures on Christ, in opposition to our guiltiness; it ventures for Christ, in opposition to all difficulties and discouragements."—*W. Bridge.*

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
This is your accepted hour;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power:
He is able,
He is willing; doubt no more!"—*Hart.*

February 20.

If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.—LUKE ix. 23.

IS my life one of self-denial, self-conquest, and living to God? Can I bear toil, weariness, and want, if need be, for my Saviour's name and glory? Do I endeavour, with God's help, to accommodate myself to the daily vexations and little trials which must be met in our every-day life? Do I strive cheerfully to take up my cross and follow Christ, remembering that He too suffered? Do I remember that the cross must precede the crown?

"If God hath sent thee a cross, take it up, and follow Him: use it wisely, lest it be unprofitable; bear it patiently, lest it be intolerable. If it be light, slight it not; if heavy, murmur not."—*Quarles.*

"Then up, my soul, and tremble not,
Whene'er the cross oppresseth;
Flee thou to God, His blessed light
The weary soul refresheth."—*German.*

February 23.

Help thou mine unbelief.—MARK ix. 24.

AM I willing to venture my all in the hands of Christ, remembering there must be no reservation of unbelief? Do I pray that my little grain of faith may be increased? Do I pray for help against my inward, latent unbelief, which is ever ready to rise up against me? Instead of pondering over the weakness of my faith, do I turn to Him who alone can make my faith strong?

"Difficulties, we reckon on meeting in our path, strangely vanish when we are seeking Christ. An unseen hand has cleared them away before we come."

"What was said of the Israelites, 'They could not enter in because of unbelief;' the same may be said of many of our prayers—they cannot enter heaven because they are not put up in faith."—*Salter.*

"That childlike faith that asks not sight,
Waits not for wonder or for sign,
Believes, because it loves aright,—
Shall see things greater, things Divine."—*Keble.*

February 24.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.—2 COR. xiii. 5.

DO I follow the apostle's injunction in all truth and sincerity? Do I examine myself as in the presence of a God from whom nothing is hid? Do I sift the foundation of my faith, and ascertain if Christ my Saviour is its rock? Do I remember that I am ever liable to be deceived? Do I seek for the enlightening aid of the Spirit before commencing the solemn duty of self-examination?

"First, examine *how* you examine yourself. When a tradesman is about to weigh his goods, he must first of all *adjust the scales.*"

"I thought it had been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek Christ had been at the next door; but, oh, the windings, the turnings, the ups and downs that He hath led me through, and I see yet much way to the ford."—*Rutherford.*

"Help us to build each other up;
Help us ourselves to prove;
Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
And perfect us in love."

February 25.

***Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*—Eph. iv. 23.**

ARE the principles, habits, and dispositions of my soul changed? Do I shrink from indulging the sinful desires of former days? Are the things of God precious to me? Is the society of His people a pleasure to me? Does my life exhibit the change in my heart?

"Heart-work must be God's work. The great Heart-maker alone can be the great Heart-breaker."

"I heartily desire that ye would mind your country, and consider to what direction your soul setteth its face; for all come not home at night who suppose they have set their face heavenward."—*Rutherford.*

"A heart in every thought renewed,
And filled with love Divine;
Perfect and right, and pure and good—
A copy, Lord, of Thine.
Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above:
Write Thy new name upon my heart—
Thy new, best name of Love."—*Wesley.*

February 26.

***There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*—Rom. viii. 1.**

DOES sin disturb and trouble me? Do I feel depressed and crushed down because of its intolerable weight? Do I take comfort from this blessed truth, that it cannot ruin me, cannot condemn me? Do I remember that though there is much within to condemn and sink me to eternal perdition, yet that He, my Redeemer, condemns me not?

"Christ's righteousness, imputed to us by faith, justifies us; and this is the believer's title to heaven: from sanctification arises our meetness for it."—*Madan.*

"Justification is the act of God as a Judge; adoption, as a Father. By the former we are discharged from condemnation, and accepted as righteous; by the latter we are made the children of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."—*Dr. Guyse.*

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind."

February 27.

We walk by faith, not by sight.—2 Cor. v. 7.

AM I content to leave the unravelling of life's many mysteries until I come to know even as I am known? Do I try to remember that now is the trial of my faith, and that I cannot expect the heavenly reward unless I follow bravely to the field, content to take all on trust, feeling that the Infinite knows far better than my finite comprehension what is best for me here?

"Christ is never more wounded in the house of His friends than when they murmur: that most overcame His forbearance with the Jews."—*Lady Powerscourt.*

"Trust Him when you cannot trace Him. Do not try to penetrate the cloud which He brings over the earth, and to look *through* it. Keep your eye steadily fixed on the bow in the cloud. The mystery is God's, the promise is yours."—*Macduff.*

"Faith alone breathes calm devotion;
Faith can see, all fear above:
Life's worst storms but sweep an ocean
Of immeasurable love."—*T. Davis.*

February 28.

He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.—1 John ii. 6.

DO I desire to be a follower of my Divine Master? Then do I try to imitate His perfect example of obedience? Do I prayerfully endeavour to do God's commands, whether they are agreeable to me or not? If I do not find a pleasure in doing God's will, how can I say I love Him? Do I remember that the keeping of the Saviour's commandments is the great proof demanded by Him, as regards the sincerity of our love for Him?

"We do not think sufficiently of little things: yet if we desire to be like our blessed Lord and Master, and to bear His image, we should recollect that it is sometimes with the most delicate pencil and touch that the painter expresses the likeness."

"I long to be like Jesus,
Meek, loving, lowly, mild;
I long to be like Jesus,
The Father's Holy Child."—*Bonar.*

[February 29.]

***Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.*—JOEL ii. 13.**

IS my heart truly humbled on account of sin? Is my sorrow less on account of the consequences to myself than for the grievous fact of having pained so patient and long-suffering a God? Do I remember that mere words will not satisfy God; that He requires "a broken and a contrite heart" (Ps. li. 17)—a heart-repentance evinced by a change of life?

"How patient is God in the punishment of sinners!—how loath to strike! If there be but a hope of recovery, how many knots doth He untie! how many pauses doth He make on His way to justice!"—*Spenser.*

"Many persons who appear to repent are like sailors who throw their goods overboard in a storm, and wish for them again in a calm."—*Mead.*

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me!"—*Wesley.*

March 1.

***Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*—ISA. lv. 1.**

IS there any unwillingness on my part to accept this gracious invitation because it is free, requiring no price of good deeds, or goodness of any kind? Is there any undefined feeling on my part that I must be better than I am ere I can partake of this rich and soul-restoring banquet? Am I hungering and thirsting for this priceless food and drink? When all are invited, why should I not accept? Am I too proud to acknowledge that I am both hungry and thirsty?

"Oh, let us draw largely upon the treasure-house of blessing! The oftener we come, the more welcome. Why does the Lord try us, but that we may try Him, and prove that He is able and willing to do all that He has promised?"—*Winslow.*

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold! I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.'"—*Bonar.*

March 2.

Grow in grace.—2 PETER iii. 18.

AM I making any progress in religion? Do I remember that in religion there can be no standing still—the soul either progressing or retrograding? Do I strive to attain to higher degrees of holiness, or am I satisfied with the progress I have already made? Am I *running* on my heavenly way, not pausing nor looking back, lest the night of death should fall, and the door of life be shut?

"Grace is an immortal seed, cast into an immortal soil, that brings forth immortal fruit."—*Mason.*

"Any little grace that ye have, see that it be sound and true."

"Labour to know the Lord more clearly and fully; to know more of Christ, and to know Him to better purpose, so as to be more like Him, and to love Him better."—*Matthew Henry.*

"May we daily grow in grace,
And pursue the heavenly race,
Trained by wisdom, led by love,
Till we reach our rest above."

March 3.

We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.—2 COR. vi. 1.

DO I work for God and His glory? Do I work for the good of the immortal souls around me? Do I, in earnestness, diligence, and patient striving, merit the high title of co-worker with God? Do I remember that it is my duty to improve the present, not knowing how long I can call a moment mine? Do I *expect* as well as *pray* for a blessing on my labours?

"The rainbow of God's mercy is seen only in the day of grace. We should look for it in vain in the night of eternal darkness."

"That Christ and a sinner should be one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation. What more could love do?"—*Rutherford.*

"Oh, teach me at Thy feet to fall,
And yield Thee up my self, my all!
Before Thy saints my debt to own,
And live and die to Thee alone."—*H. F. Lyte.*

March 4.

Cleave unto the Lord.—Acts xi. 23.

DO I live a life of dependence on the Lord Jesus? Do I not only hold Him fast, but hold fast *by* Him? Am I strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might? Do I cleave to the Lord with earnest, firm, and deliberate resolution, rooted in Him as my only foundation? Have I bound my soul with a bond to be the Lord's, and never to turn back from following Him?

"A soldier in battle should feel as if the whole battle depended upon himself."

"Think less of yourself, and more of Christ. Cleave to His assurances in all their glorious length and breadth. Let it delight the heart of our Saviour, to find you can confide in His every word."

"Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Oh! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motive there.
To know Thy power, to hear Thy voice,
To taste Thy love—be all my choice."

March 5.

Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.—Col. iii. 23.

AM I a cheerful, willing servant, in the Lord's service? Do I feel desirous that my life should become more and more devoted to God? Do I imagine that, because I cannot do great things, my service will not be acceptable to God; instead of taking notice of the word "whatsoever," which implies that all things, great or small, are pleasing to Him, according to the spirit in which they are rendered?

"No man need think that he can ever become eminent in anything, unless he work at it with an earnestness bordering upon *enthusiasm*."—*Robert Hall.*

"The Christian must not only mind heaven, but attend to his daily calling;—like the pilot, who, while his eye is fixed upon the star, keeps his hand upon the helm."—*Watson.*

"One by one thy duties wait thee;
Let thy whole strength go to each:
Let no future dreams elate thee;
Learn thou first what these can teach."—*A. A. Proctor.*

March 6.

Watch, and remember.—ACTS xx. 31.

AM I sufficiently on the watch against temptation? When a yielding inclination steals over me, do I pray that I may be kept? Do I watch against any opportunities of doing good slipping from my grasp? When tempted to murmur because of present trouble, do I remember the past, and pray that its remembrance may sanctify the present with gratitude? Do I keep the lamp of my profession trimmed and lighted, that so the day of the Lord may not come as a thief in the night?

"Opportunities are like importunities. They are like flowers that fade at night; seize them, therefore, while they last."

"If we knew ourselves well, to want temptations is the greatest temptation of all."—*Rutherford.*

"Watch!—'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak He's near:
Mark the first signal of His hand,
And ready all appear."—*Doddridge.*

March 7.

Abide in Him.—1 JOHN ii. 28.

DO I endeavour to keep up a dependence upon Christ, and communion with Him? Does my regard to my Saviour's word prove that I abide in it? Do I abide in His merit as my righteousness and plea; and is it in me a comfort and support? Do I realize that unless I abide in Him, my life must be a fruitless one; at best, I must be but a cumberer of the ground? Do I remember that without Christ my best deeds are displeasing to God, and unacceptable? Do I abide in Him in the day of trouble?

"The Lord Jesus is the safe refuge of the soul in all the storms of life; He is the secret place of the Most High; all in Him dwell under the shadow of the Almighty. Eternal safety is in Him; and it is vain for us to seek safety anywhere else."—*Rees.*

"Christian! would'st thou holy be?
Jesus says, 'Abide in me.'
Sanctified in Him thou art;
Sanctify Him in thy heart."

March 8.

Endure afflictions.—2 Tim. iv. 5.

bear my trials patiently? Do I allow myself to
ecome discouraged by them? Do I call to mind
e example of patient endurance, as shown in my
'e? Do I reflect on the great amount of good
t this endurance, or bearing of trial, may have
Though heart and flesh truly fail, do I remem-
en I am weak then is He strong?
dries up the water in the lake, it is to lead you
iling Fountain. If He sends the cross, it is to
crown: for no cross, no crown; no rain, no
Nottidge.
nd His cross are two guests worth entertaining.
fain have Christ by Himself, and so have Him
the market will not come down."—*Rutherford.*

"Were it not better to be still?
Let Him strike home, we bless the rod;
Never so safe as when our will
Yields, undiscerned by all but God."—*Keble.*

March 9.

Always labouring.—Col. iv. 12.

a faithful labourer? Can I, in all sincerity, say
at I do what I can—that I exhaust my sphere
duty? What are the actuating motives of my
m I working for the glory of God, for my own
atification, or to win the praise of man? Am I
ward to an end, a rest from all labour? Am I
purchase a title to that rest; or am I satisfied
iceless cost which has purchased it?
is the mother of many sinful children. They
thing are in the ready way to do worse than
t was not for nothing that we were called out
"—*Mason.*
be happiness on earth, it is in labouring in the
rist. The vineyard must be cultivated; and the
, that we enter it and work."

"Teach me to live! no idler let me be,
But in Thy service hand and heart employ;
Prepared to do Thy bidding cheerfully—
Be this my highest and my holiest joy."

March 10.

Be ye also ready.—MATT. xxiv. 44.

AM I a waiting as well as a working servant? Am I ready to receive my Lord, let the hour of His approach be far distant or near at hand? Is my soul clothed with the Saviour's righteousness, fit to be received by Him? Is the prospect of death and the second coming one of apprehension or of peaceful anticipation to me?

"What is it I want? What will satisfy me? I must meet death, I must meet judgment, I must meet God, I must meet eternity."—*Cecil.*

"We are kept at uncertainty concerning the precise time of His coming, that we may be always ready; for it is no thanks to a man to be ready for an attack if we know beforehand just the time when it will be made."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Ye servants of the Lord,
Each in his office wait,
Observant of His heavenly word,
And watchful at the gate."—*Doddridge.*

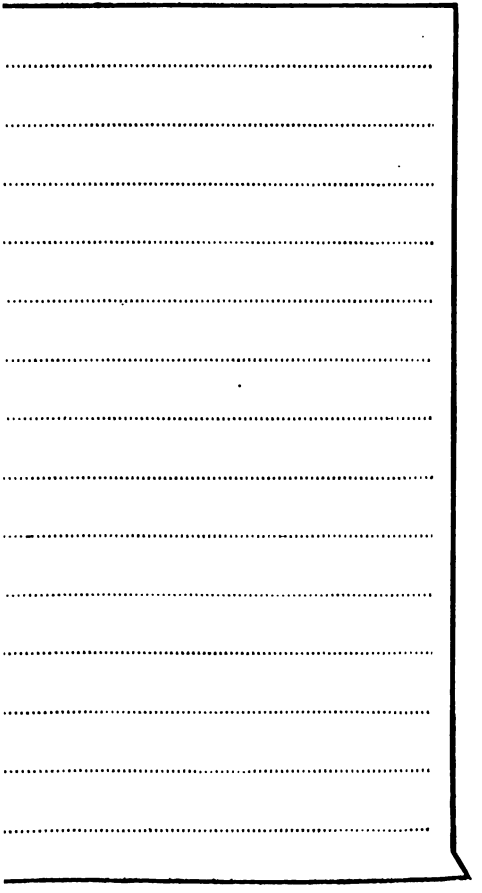
March 11.

Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.
Ps. iv. 6.

DO I desire the favour of the Lord above all things? Do I pray that I may be at perfect peace with God, and that I may know that that peace is mine? Is it my earnest desire to live worthy of the Lord's favour? Do I pray that the darkness of my soul may be irradiated by the light of the Lord?

"Lord, let there be light, and I shall see light; I shall see the way, and avoid wandering; I shall see the truth, and shun error; I shall see life, and escape death. Oh! illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death, and direct my feet into the way of peace."—*Quarles.*

"Great God, that art the flowing spring of light,
Enrich mine eyes with Thy refulgent ray:
Thou art my oath, direct my steps aright;
I have no other light, no other way.
I trust my God, and Him alone pursue;
His law shall be my path, His heavenly light my clue."—*Quarles.*



March 12.

In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.—Ps. v. 3.

ARE my waking thoughts given to God? Do I feel my need of morning prayer to enable me to be prepared for the many dangers and temptations of the coming day? Do I praise my heavenly Keeper for His ever-recurrent kindness to me? Do I pray for thankfulness, if my prayers are granted; for submission, if they are denied; for patience in waiting, if they are deferred?

"Christ often heareth when He doth not answer. His *not answering is an answer*, and says,—Pray on, go on, cry on; for the Lord holdeth His door fast bolted, not to keep you out, but that you may knock, and it shall be opened." —*Rutherford.*

"When first thine eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like. Our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty: true hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun.
Give Him thy first thoughts, then; so shalt thou keep
His company all day, and in Him sleep."—*Vaughan.*

March 13.

Lead me, O Lord....make Thy way straight before my face. Ps. v. 8.

IS it my earnest prayer that God may, by His grace, guide and keep me in the way of duty? Do I strive to second the restraining grace of my God, by endeavouring to keep in the narrow way? Do I find comfort and satisfaction to myself in dwelling on the protecting power and willingness of my heavenly Leader?

"The cloud which appeared to the prophet Ezekiel carried with it winds and storms; but it was environed with a golden circle, to teach us that the storms of affliction which happen to God's children are encompassed with brightness and smiling felicity."—*Caussin.*

"Men may judge us by the success of our efforts: God looks at the efforts themselves."—*C. G. Brown.*

"I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be treated as a child,
And guided as I go."

Thou wilt shew me the path of life.—Ps. ...

HAVE I committed my eternal salvation unquestioi ingly into the hands of God? Do I look to Hi for light to guide me onward? Do I rememb , if I make God's glory my chief aim, He will make m ire as well as present peace His care? Let me not forg t the trials and obstructions that beset my path a ant by my Father to prepare me for the heavenly rest. 'What we want in religion is not new light, but new *sigh* t new paths, but new zeal to walk in the old paths." "God would not suffer His people to be tempted, if H ace were not sufficient for them, not only to save the om harm, but to make them gainers by it: even this sh ork for good."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Thrice happy world, where gilded toys
No more disturb our thoughts, no more pollute our joys!
There light and shade no more succeed by turns;
There reigns the eternal Sun with an unclouded ray;
There all is calm as night, yet all immortal day,
And truth for ever shines, and love for ever burns."

March 15.

He drew me out of many waters.—Ps. xviii. 16.

WHEN the Lord sees fit to remove or avert trial, I David's spirit of thankful acknowledgment I endeavour to bear in mind that my delive from God, and that to Him is due my song of p distress has driven me to p

March 16.

words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, ceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my emer.—Ps. xix. 14.

IS it my earnest prayer that my conversation may become sanctified, as well as my deeds? Whom do I desire to please most by my words—God, or the Am I ashamed to let others see that I am of God? ny conscience is pained by ungodly conversation, do any effort to turn its tide?

r conversation need not always be *of* grace, but it always be *with* grace."—*Matthew Henry.*

ke others to see Christ in you—moving, doing, speak-d thinking. Your *actions* will speak of Him, if He ou."—*Rutherford.*

"Jesus, crucified for me,
May I closely follow Thee!
Ever walking in Thy ways,
Leaning on Thee all my days;
Like Thee may I ever be,
Jesus, crucified for me."

March 17.

ord is my shepherd; I shall not want.—Ps. xxiii. 1.

M I one of the Good Shepherd's sheep—quiet and gentle, willing to follow His voice, and to be led by Him? Do I realize that, as God is my Shep-shall be supplied with whatever is needful; and if I ot all I would like to have, do I conclude that it ıot be for my good, or that I shall have it in His own me? Do I take the comfort here given to the Good rd's sheep, that as He is God, He is all-sufficient for ıts and difficulties?

who follows Christ, follows one from whom light ı upon the road we are to go—showing all its turnings ıdings, and enabling us to walk safely, surely, and lly in our way."

"O tell me, Thou life and delight of my soul,
Where the flock of Thy pasture is feeding!
I seek Thy protection, I need Thy control,
I would go where my Shepherd is leading:
The tempest now rages, my soul is distressed,
And the pathway of peace I am losing."

March 18.

I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.—Ps. xxiii. 4.

DOES the thought of the future give me pain? Why should I take it out of my Father's hands? Why am I not disposed to trust my future as well as my present with Him? How can I tell that the future will ever come? Am I believing the words of Scripture which say that God is with me? Why should I distrust the power of the Maker of all things to keep evil from me, if He should think good? Am I not taking that power out of His hands by trying to order for myself?

"My duty as a Christian is with the *present*, not with the *future*, which is God's."—*Bedell.*

"To have, or to want, is best, as He pleaseth."—*Rutherford.*

"Does each day upon its wing
Its allotted burden bring?
Load it not, besides, with sorrow
Which belongeth to the morrow.
Strength is promised, strength is given,
When the heart by God is riven;
But foredate the day of woe,
And alone thou bear'st the blow."

March 19.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. Ps. xxv. 7.

HAVE I cast behind my back the sins for which I plead God's forgetfulness? "Is the remembrance of them grievous?" "Is the burden of them intolerable?" Have I prayed that God, for Christ's sake, would nail the handwriting of them to the cross, and blot it out with my Redeemer's precious blood? Do I take to myself the comfort of pardon? Do I plead with God the merits and imputed righteousness of Jesus?

"Confession of sin is one of the sweet, holy, and profitable exercises of the soul. It endears us to Christ, and endears Christ to us."

"I seal what I assert, that the old ashes of the sins of my youth are now fires of sorrow to me."—*Rutherford.*

"With my burden I begin—
Lord, remove this load of sin;
Let Thy blood, for sinners spilt,
Set my conscience free from guilt."—*J. Newton.*

March 20.

Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.—Ps. xxvi. 2.

HAVE I the same consciousness of rectitude of purpose which enabled David to appeal to the Almighty for examination? Do I remember that from His eyes the minutest particle of sin cannot escape unnoticed, and that what may be most carefully shrouded from our fellow-sinner's scrutiny, is unveiled before Him—the God of holiness?

"Let us remember that mere reformation differs as much from regeneration, as white-washing an old rotten house differs from taking it down and building a new one in its room."—*Toplady.*

"Let a Christian often compare his former condition, as a sinner unsaved, with his state as a renewed believer, that his love and gratitude may be excited, and his affections drawn to Him who has wrought the change."

"O Thou, to whose all-searching sight
The darkness shineth as the light,
Search, prove my heart—it looks to Thee;
O burst these bonds, and set it free!"

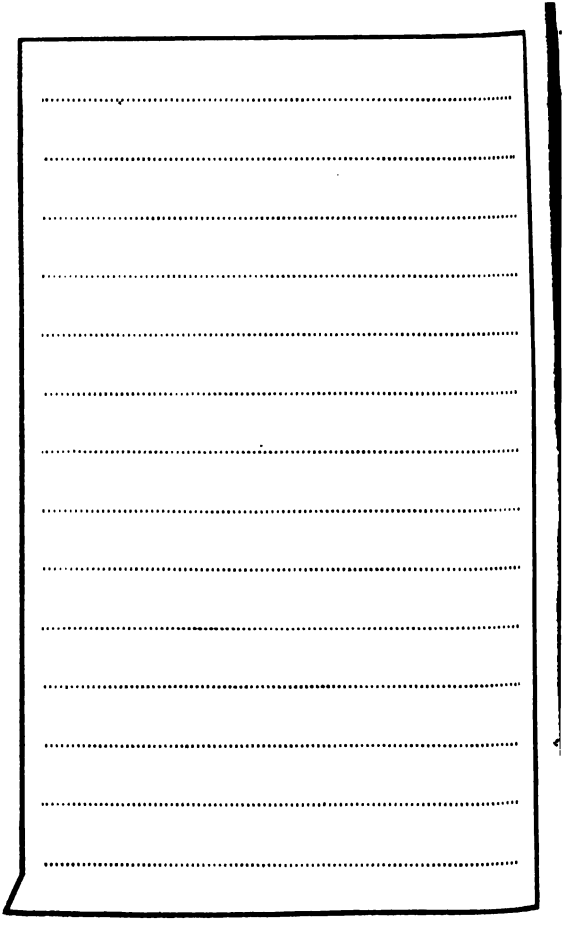
March 21.

My times are in Thy hand.—Ps. xxxi. 15.

DO I believe that if my times are in God's hand He can help me, and if He is *my* God He will help me? Ought it not to be my great support that my times, or opportunities, are in His hand, and that He will order and dispose of them as will be best for my real good? Is it not better that all the things of life, and their timing, should be with my omnipotent Father?

"One minute sooner than God's time would not be His people's mercy....Our *opportunities* are in God's hand (as some read it); and therefore He knows how to choose the best time for our deliverance, and we must wait for it."—*Matthew Henry.*

"That God that made my heart, is He alone
That of Himself both can and will
Give rest unto my thoughts, and fill
Them full of all content and quietness;
That so I may possess
My soul in patience,
Until He find it time to call me hence."—*Quarles.*



March 24.

With Thee is the fountain of life.—Ps. xxxvi. 9.

O I realize that God is the Fountain of spiritual life, and that from Him comes all the strength and comfort of the sanctified soul? Do I acknowledge ı Him is light, perfection, wisdom, knowledge, joy; at in His knowledge there is that which will abun- satisfy the cravings of the immortal soul? Do I ı mind that in the heavenly light there is true light, can never flicker nor lead us astray?

e fountain of God's grace is not a little scanty spring desert, round which some thirsty travellers meet and one another, lest there might not be sufficient for ther; but a mighty, inexhaustible river, on the banks ch all may stand and drink sufficient, leaving enough else who may want."—*R. C. Trench.*

"Sun and Shield alike Thou art;
Guide and guard my erring heart;
Grace and glory flow from Thee;
Shower, O shower them, Lord, on me!"—*H. F. Lyte.*

March 25.

Do good.—Ps. xxxvii. 3.

O I "do good" to my own soul, by endeavouring to know, love, and live to God, to please Him, and to be pleased in Him? Do I endeavour to "do to others, by seeking to win them to a knowledge of ıd of His ways? Do I seek to make religion agree- those around me, by a pleasing exemplification of its l influence in my daily walk and life?

, if I could wear this tongue to the stump, in extoll- Lord and Master!"—*Rutherford.*

ı must not think to trust in God, and then live as we o, it is not trusting God, but tempting Him, if we do ake conscience of our duty to Him: nor must we to do good, and then to trust to ourselves and our ghteousness and strength; no, we must trust in the ınd do good."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Unhasting, yet unresting,
Work calmly day by day;
Soar for the skies, my spirit,
And on thy Maker stay!"—*T. Davis.*

March 26.

Rest in the Lord.—Ps. xxxvii. 7.

AM I reconciled to all the Lord does? Do I acc in it, whatever it may be, because it is bes is, since He has appointed it? Am I well sa that He will still make all to work together for my though *I* see not when or how it can be? Am I sile fore the Lord, not with a sullen, but with a subr silence? Do I rest in His promises, His immutabilit unfailing love and care for my best and immortal int

"Trust not so much to the comforts of God, as God of comforts."—*Mason.*

"A patient bearing of what is laid upon us, and a expectation of what is further appointed for us, are a our interest as they are our duty; for it will make ways easy, giving to us a realization of 'rest in the I —*Matthew Henry.*

"'Rest in the Lord!' sweet word of truth,
A word for age, a word for youth,
A word for all the weary world—
A banner-word by love unfurled!"—*W. H. Have*

March 27.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will him in time of trouble.—Ps. xli. 1.

DO I make it a part of my daily life to consi poor? Do I remain passive, only helping am told that there is a necessity; or do I c the knowledge of the poor through my own self-sac efforts? Am I courteous and sympathizing in manne I leave out of sight improper feelings of pride? Do to succour the perishing soul as well as the perishing

"Take care of the poor, and the Lord will take care o

"Liberality to the poor is the surest and safest thriving. Such as practise it may be sure of relie God."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Give! as the morning that flows out of heaven;
Give! as the waves when their channel is riven;
Give! as the free air and sunshine are given—
Lavishly, utterly, carelessly give;
Not the waste drops of thy cup overflowing,
Not the faint sparks of thy hearth ever glowing,
Not a pale bud from thy June roses blowing—
Give as He gave thee who gave thee to live!"

[illegible]

March 28.

***God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death.*—Ps. xlviii. 14.**

M I perplexing myself by seeking a way of my own out of my difficulties; or have I given myself and my perplexities into the hands of my infallible e? Does the thought of the death-valley terrify me: do I not rest on this comfortable assurance, that He ead me, and be with me to the last; unto death, through , and beyond death; down to death, and up again to ?

ur fair morning is at hand; the day-star is near the r, and we are not many miles from home; what matter, of ill entertainment in the smoky inns of this worth- world! We are not to stay here, and we shall be dearly me to Him to whom we are going."—*Rutherford.*

> "*Unto* death and *over* death;
> Not one object of His care
> Ever suffered shipwreck there."—*Bonar.*

March 29.

***e in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*—Ps. li. 10.**

S it my great desire that my corrupt nature should be changed? Do I, like David, perceiving the depth of my heart's depravity, and my utter in- y to cleanse it, implore of God to create a clean heart n me? Do I remember that no amount of depravity e beyond the cleansing power of Him who made the , and that He alone can make it new?

hy deserts are hell, wrath, rejection; Christ's deserts fe, pardon, acceptation. If God hath shown thee the er, He will give thee the latter."—*Wilcox.*

ord, forgive my sins, and suffer me to keep them. Is he meaning of my prayers? Christ has removed the n of sin from my conscience a thousand times; and as as He takes it off, I lay it on again."—*Adams.*

> "Great God, create our hearts anew,
> And form our spirits pure and true;
> Oh, make us wise betimes to see
> Our danger and our remedy."

March 30.

Uphold me with Thy free Spirit.—Ps. li. 12.

DO I feel that I am ready to fall into sin or into despair if left to myself? Do I pray for the sustaining power of the Spirit? Do I pray that the Spirit may set me free from the power of sin? Is it my wish that the Spirit may fill my soul with noble and generous principles, that I may always act as becomes my profession? Do I pray for a firm and fixed spirit, that I may be cheerful and constant in my duty?

"The least sight of Christ is saving; the least touch of Him is healing."—*Wilcox.*

"Man being delivered from the condemnation and bondage of sin, is sealed by the Spirit, and walks before God in righteousness and holiness."—*Dr. Sumner.*

"In a service which Thy will appoints,
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught the 'truth
That makes Thy children 'free;'
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty."—*Waring.*

March 31.

O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth Thy praise.—Ps. li. 15.

DO I pray, not only for God's grace, but that I may improve that grace to His glory? Do I seek, not only for abundant matter for praise, but for a heart enlarged in praise? Are the words which my lips utter the result of heart-praise? When praying for future blessings, do I offer the sacrifice of praise for past mercies?

"Great blessings that are won with prayer are worn with thankfulness. Prayer and thanks are like the double motion of the lungs—the air that is sucked in, in prayer, is breathed forth again by thanks."—*Goodwin.*

"To them that are tongue-tied by reason of guilt, the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins says effectually, *Ephphatha,*'—'*Be opened;*' and when the lips are opened, what should they speak but the praises of God?"—*Matthew Henry.*

"Help me to praise Thee day by day,
Till earth's dark scenes have passed away;
Till in Thine own unclouded light
Thy glory satisfies my sight."

April 1.

***The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.*—Ps. li. 17.**

DO I remember that what God requires is, that the work of repentance should be wrought in the heart? Is my heart broken, not in despair, but in necessary humiliation and sorrow for sin? Is my heart breaking with itself—breaking from its sin; is it softened to the word of God, patient under the rod of God, subdued and brought into obedience to the law of God; is it tender—does it tremble at God's word?

"Crosses and afflictions are God's call to examine our hearts and our lives."—*Richardson.*

"It is the crushed olive that yields oil, the pressed grape that gives wine. It was the smitten rock that gave the people water. So is it the broken, contrite heart, that is most rich in holiness and fragrant in grace."

"Yea, though my hard heart scarce to Thee can groan,
Remember that Thou once didst write on stone."—*G. Herbert.*

April 2.

***Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*—Ps. lv. 6.**

IS my present life such as becomes one who desires and hopes to exchange unrest for rest? Does the thought of being for ever with the Lord make heaven dear to me? When fainting beneath the burden and heat of the day, does the knowledge that it will not always last help me to bear more cheerfully, and look forward more hopefully?

"Many persons wish to enjoy heaven at last, but have no wish to be heavenly-minded yet."

"Christ's cross is the sweetest burden that ever I bare; it is such a burden as wings to a bird or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour."—*Rutherford.*

"Oh that the pinions of a clipping dove
Would cut my passage through the empty air;
Mine eyes being sealed, how would I mount above
The reach of danger and forgotten care!
My backward eyes should ne'er commit that fault,
Whose lasting guilt should build a monument of salt."—*Quarles.*

April 3.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.
Ps. lv. 22.

DO I take God at His word, and leave my burden with Him? Do I take my blessings likewise to God, asking Him to keep and increase them? Do I stay myself on His care and promise, and rest in the assurance that all shall work for good? Do I roll *all* my burden on the Lord, or do I keep a portion for myself, trying to bear it in my own strength?

"Turn your care into prayer, and the care will evaporate and vanish, and your care will not be felt."

"God has not promised to free us immediately from that trouble which gives rise to our cares and fears; but He will provide that we be not tempted above what we are able to bear."—*Matthew Henry.*

"When God shall cease His word to keep,
Or when His watchful eye can sleep,
My heart may *then* forget her faith,
And sink 'neath sorrow—fail in death."

April 4.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits.
Ps. lxviii. 19.

AM I thankfully aware of the various benefits with which the Lord loads my life? Do I remember that from Him come the countless mercies that start up on every side of my daily walk; that from Him come my hope of future happiness, my Saviour's ceaseless intercession, the Spirit's upholding power? Do I show forth my gratitude by my life?

"They that deserve *nothing* should be content with *anything.* Bless God for what you have, and trust God for what you want."—*Mason.*

"He that daily loads us with benefits will not put us off with present things for a portion, but will be the God of our salvation; and what He gives us now, He gives as the God of our salvation, pursuant to the great plan of our salvation."—*Matthew Henry.*

"When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise."

April 5.

***We cannot be satisfied.*—Job xxxi. 31.**

OES the world give me satisfaction? does earthly affection? does learning? Is it not because "passing away" is written on each dear thing of Is it not because we have not the power, though we ould, of keeping for ever with us the thing we love? I sought for satisfaction in Jesus? Do I feel that no-short of His love can fill the aching void left by all

whatsoever state I am, I first look up to heaven, and ıber that my principal business here is to get there. look abroad on the world and see how many are there ınhappy than myself. Thus I learn where true happi- ı placed, where all my cares must end, and that I have ıse to repine."

"If loving hearts were never lonely,
If all they wished might always be;
Accepting what they look for only,
They might be glad—but not in Thee."—*Waring.*

April 6.

I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; 'il I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood -Ps. lxxiii. 16, 17.

M I, like the Psalmist, perplexed with something too painful for me to solve; have I, like him, taken my difficulty at once to my heavenly r? Do I realize that my sanctuary need not neces- be God's house, but that it is wherever I meet my ı prayer? Do I remember that the throne of grace is ıt all times?

ɔedience is necessary to our comfort and assurance, h not to pardon."—*Richardson.*

ɔst of our difficulties arise from discussing what bo- to God. God does not reason with us, but replies to spicious reasoning by displaying anew the love of His and the power of His arm."—*Bonar.*

"Teach me to live! my daily cross to bear;
Nor murmur though I bend beneath the load;
Only be with me. Let me feel Thee near:
Thy smile sheds gladness on the darkest road."

April 7.

So foolish was I, and ignorant.—Ps. lxxiii. 22.

WHEN the Lord makes a way for me in the midst of clouds and darkness, am I prepared to acknowledge that I was ignorant of that which I might have known, and which, if I had known aright, would have been sufficient to have silenced my murmurs? When overtaken in temptation, am I prepared to acknowledge my folly in permitting its ascendency over me? Weary of wandering, have I gone to God for rest, where rest alone is to be found?

"My heart panted after this—to be before God as in the dust, that it might be as nothing, and that God might be all; that I might become a little child."—*Edwards.*

"Long did I toil, and knew no earthly rest;
Far did I rove, and found no certain home:
At last I sought them in His sheltering breast
Who opes His arms and bids the weary come.
With Him I found a home, a rest Divine;
And I since then am His, and He is mine."—*F. H. Lyte.*

April 8.

The Lord God is a sun and shield.—Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

DOES darkness seem to reign within? then do I remember that if God be my God He will be to me a Sun, to enlighten and turn the darkness into day, to guide and direct me? Do I fear danger? then let me apply to Him who will be my Shield, to secure me from the fiery darts of the wicked one. Do I endeavour to "walk in the light of the Lord," having the blessed assurance that in so doing He will be my never-failing Protector?

"God may sometimes delay His promise, but He will not deny it. He may sometimes change it, but He will not break it."—*Watson.*

"Though you get strokes and frowns from your Lord, yet believe His love more than your own feelings."—*Rutherford.*

"Feeble, we cannot war with sin:
Anoint Thou us—we march victorious.
Not till we are renewed within
Can we be soldiers, valiant, glorious.
O Spirit, be my spirit's shield;
Without Thy help, I craven yield."

April 9

Teach us to number our days.—Ps. xc. 12.

O I pray for grace to consider duly how few are the days of my life? Do I endeavour so to number my days, that I may not be like him who, the his soul was required of him, had counted on long ? Do I so number my days as to compare my work them, giving to it extra diligence, as one who has not to live? Do I pray for Divine assistance in this num- g, that it may be blessed to my soul's benefit?

how little is your hand-breadth and span-length of here! Eternity is coming, posting on with wings: shall every man's blacks and whites be brought to "—*Rutherford.*

ly life hangs by a single thread, but that thread is in her's hand."—*Evans.*

o be religious is to be wise."—*Matthew Henry.*

" Lord, teach us to number the days of our life-time,
And reckon the days that for ever have flown;
Regarding them all as but steps of the progress—
As steps that are noted, or yet to be known."

April 10.

Harden not your heart.—Ps. xcv. 8.

AVE I accepted gladly and thankfully the offer of salvation, or am I still trifling with it? Have I bent to the yoke of Christ, or do I seek to get under its requirements? If my heart becomes ned, although hearing God's Word, and partaking of ordinances, let me remember it is my own act and and that I alone must bear the blame for ever.

f the very idea of having a hard heart makes you ble, it is a certain sign that your heart is not hard."—*ernard.*

ate repentance should be carefully distinguished from ed repentance. True repentance is never too late, but ed repentance is seldom true. The penitent thief's ate repentance, but we have no evidence that it was red repentance."

" Admit Him ere His anger burn,
Lest He depart, and ne'er return;
Admit Him, or the hour's at hand
When at His door, denied, you'll stand "

April 11.

Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.—Ps. xcvii. 11.

DO I remember that, as a follower of Christ, and a sharer of His kingdom hereafter, I must expect tribulation in the world? But do I let this comfort sink deep into my heart, that light is sown for God's troubled ones; and that though for "a time, *if need be*," it is hidden behind a bank of dark clouds, yet it is there, and that my not seeing it will not negative that truth?

"Light-seed is sown in the vale of fogs: though often hidden, seed-like, for a time under the dark clouds of sorrow, it is only taking root in the chastened heart: soon it will appear, and bring forth the fragrant flower, and the yellow fruit, and bloom usefully in the garden of God."

"Lord, we sit and cry to Thee,
Like the blind beside the way;
Make our darkened souls to see
The glory of Thy perfect day!
Lord, rebuke our sullen night,
And give Thyself unto our sight!"—*Milman.*

April 12.

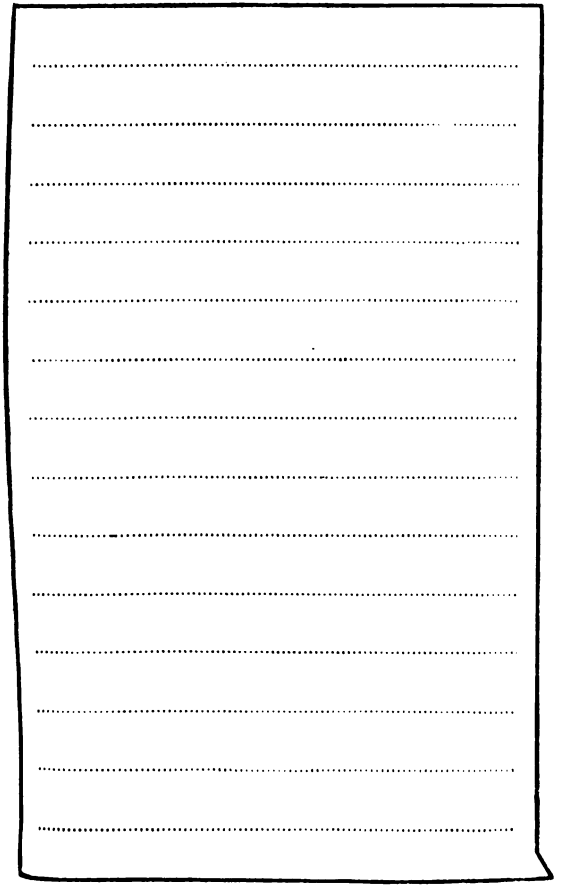
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.—Ps. ciii. 3.

DO I estimate sufficiently the inestimable privileges which pardon of sin confers on the forgiven sinner; taking away that which kept good things from us, and restoring us to the favour of God, the Author and Giver of all good things? Do I ever think of the dark depth of sin which has been forgiven by a pure and holy God? Do I remember that that forgiveness has not ceased, that it is a continued act; for God is ever forgiving, as we are ever sinning and repenting?

"I live upon forgiveness, and stand in need of washing every moment."—*Jerome.*

"Our Mediator, like Jonah, His type, seeing the storming sea of God's wrath working tempestuously, and ready to swallow us up, cast in Himself to appease the storm."

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound—
Make and keep me pure within."



April 18.

I give myself unto prayer.—Ps. cix. 4.

DO I make prayer a business? Am I as earnest in praying for spiritual blessings as I am in seeking temporal advantages? In all perplexities and troubles do I betake myself at once, and without human help, to the "throne of grace"? Do I expect *an* answer, though it may not be as I would desire, nor in the way I had hoped?

"Prayer is not eloquence, but earnestness; not the definition of helplessness, but the feeling of it; not figures of speech, but compunction of soul."

"In trading, he gets most by his commodity that can forbear his money the longest; so does the Christian that can with most patience stay for a return to his prayer. Such a soul shall never be ashamed of his waiting."—*Gurnall.*

"The aching head, the heart oppressed,
Prayer places on a Father's breast;
However heavy be the load,
In prayer I roll it all on God."—*S. R. M.*

April 14.

The Lord hath done great things for us.—Ps. cxxvi. 3.

DO I realize, in their length, breadth, depth, and height, the great things which the Lord has done and is doing for me? Am I thankful for His daily care? for my purchased redemption through the blood of Jesus? for the pardon and forgiveness of my unnumbered sins? for the gift of the Holy Spirit? for the promise of the life to come in glory everlasting?

"Shall I grudge to spend my life for Him who did not grudge to shed His life-blood for me?"—*Bishop Beveridge.*

"How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! As little do I take away of my great sea,—the boundless love of Christ."—*Rutherford.*

"Pardon—from an offended God!
Pardon—for sins of deepest dye!
Pardon—bestowed through Jesus' blood!
Pardon—that brings the rebel nigh!
Who is a pard'ning God like Thee,
Or who has grace so rich and free?"

April 15.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.—Ps. cxxvi. 6.

DO I sow any precious seed? Is my seed taken direct from God's holy Word? Do I feel discouraged because I cannot *see* much, if any, fruit as the result of my labours? then, perhaps, I forget that often the beginnings of grace in the soul are invisible save to the Almighty Eye. Am I not too much inclined to look for present rather than future reward; to work for my own gratification rather than for God's glory?

"I never seem fit to say a word to a sinner except when I have a broken heart myself."—*Dr. Payson.*

"There are tears which are themselves the seed that we must sow: tears of sorrow for sin, our own and others'; and tears of tenderness in prayer."—*Matthew Henry.*

"From the far off fields of earthly toil
A goodly host they come;
And sounds of music are on the air—
'Tis the song of the harvest home."

April 16.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.—Ps. cxli. 3.

DO I beg of God to keep me from sin, knowing that my prayers cannot find acceptance with Him, unless I take care to *watch* against sin? Am I as earnest for God's grace in me as for His favour towards me? Do I pray that I may not be surprised into any sinful words, and that no word may be suffered to go out of my lips which might tend to the dishonour of God?

"Of thine unspoken word thou art master; thy spoken word is master of thee."

"Oh, never say a careless word
Hath not the power to pain!
The shaft may ope some hidden wound
That closes not again.
Weigh well those light-winged messengers;
God marked thy heedless word,
And with it too the falling tear—
The heart-pangs that it stirred."

[redacted]

April 17.

Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God: Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.—Ps. cxliii. 10.

DO I pray not only to know God's will, but how to do it? Is it my desire to know and do God's will, and to stand complete in it? If in very deed I take God for my God, why should I not depend upon Him to teach me to do His will, as a master teaches his servant? Do I desire God's Spirit to guide me into holy living, which leads to heaven, "the land of uprightness"?

"When harassed by unbelief—when books fail to satisfy, and reasonings are not conclusive, commit the matter to the Lord; and as He sends forth His Spirit of truth, and by that best of casuists leads to the land of uprightness, you will find rest to your souls."

"Lead, Saviour, lead, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene—one step enough for me."

April 18.

God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.—Rom. v. 8.

DO I give to God the sole and small return which He asks for His unfathomable love—namely, the love and homage of my heart? Do I realize the unparalleled fact, that God, though hating the sin, loves the sinner, who loves Him not, and who, in his unrepentant state, is a rebel against Him? Can I wonder any longer that my Saviour should command me to love my enemies, since He set me the example by loving me?

"Still the wonder in heaven—which must eclipse all other marvels in heaven, earth, or hell—is, and ever will be, the unspeakable love of God in Christ, by which salvation is accessible to the very chief of sinners."—*Owen.*

"God's love makes a net for His people, which will surely catch them and haul them to land."—*Boston.*

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all."

April 19.

I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.—Rom. vii. 18.

IS the sense of indwelling corruption very present to me, acting as a salutary check against the growth of spiritual pride? Do I feel the insufficiency of the law to justify even a child of God? Am I not too prone to feel an inward satisfaction with my good deeds, taking the merit to myself? Do I pray earnestly for grace to overcome my innate corruption, and to seek more thoroughly for the teaching of Him who leadeth into all truth?

"It is the peculiar glory of gospel grace to humble every believer in the dust, and from gratitude and love to produce the best obedience."—*Venn.*

"A proud Christian is a contradiction in terms."

"Deep in my inmost heart corruption lies;
In me no good exists—all, all is sin;
I cling to Thee. My being's strongest gates
Do thou unbar, O Lord, and enter in."—*Hatch.*

April 20.

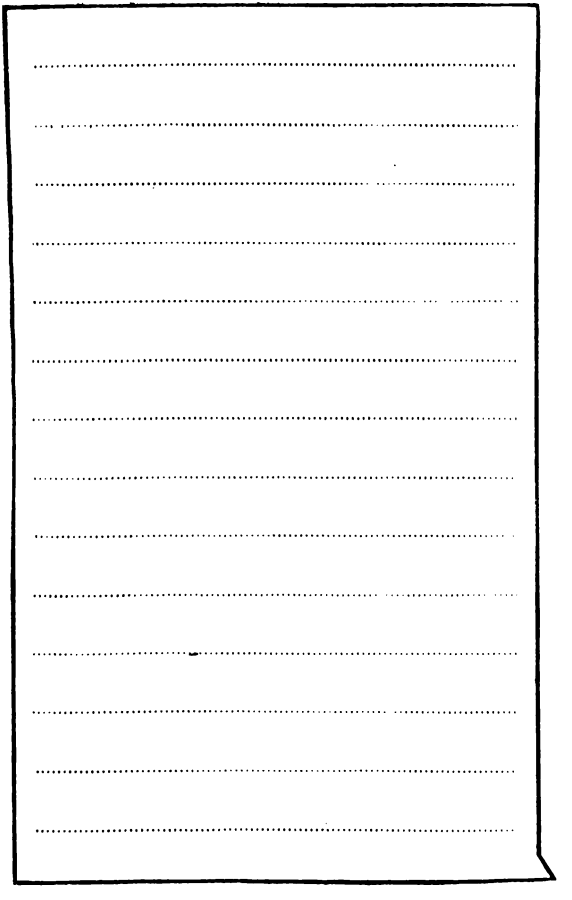
If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Rom. viii. 9.

HAVE I the Spirit of Christ? Am I meek, lowly, humble, teachable, patient, self-denying; as Christ was? Do I think to tread in His footsteps without the Spirit? If the Spirit of God does not dwell within me, bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, then I am none of Christ's, I am at enmity with Him; and am I content to be at enmity with the Friend who gave His life for me?

"There is no bitterer work than seeking for a departed Christ—a Christ that has gone because He has been driven away."—*Power.*

"Come, Holy Spirit, come,
Let Thy bright beams arise;
Dispel the darkness from our minds,
The darkness from our eyes.

"Convince us of our sin,
And lead to Jesus' blood;
And to our wondering view reveal
The boundless love of God."



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April 21.

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.—ROM. viii. 18.

DO I remember that present imbittering suffering is but for the *present*, goes no further than for the things of time—in comparison lasts but for a moment? Do I put in the other scale, the exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is for those "who have come out of great tribulation"? Are my trials sanctified, preparing me for that glory to be revealed? Do I try to turn my trials into blessings, taking them to the throne of grace?

"Shall I dictate to the only wise God, my Saviour, what sort of corrective discipline He ought to adopt in training me up for my purchased inheritance of glory."—*H. White.*

"Do not look at life's long sorrow,
See how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for to-morrow—
Every day begin again."—*A. A. Procter.*

April 22.

The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.—ROM. viii. 26.

DO I desire the help of the Spirit in prayer, remembering that while in this world, hoping and waiting for what we see not, we must be praying? Do I acknowledge that I do not even know what to ask, being too apt to separate *the end from the means?* Do I feel that in *manner* I cannot pray as I ought, that I have not always the heart to pray (2 Sam. vii. 27), but that my thoughts wander and become distracted easily?

"As the gardener walks round his beds to see what trees are weak, and to give his vines and other trees the support they need, so does the Holy Spirit assist our weakness. He takes hold of the burden with us, which we are unable to lift, much less to carry of ourselves, and makes His strength perfect in our weakness."

"Not what we wish, but what we want,
Oh, let Thy grace supply:
The good unasked, in mercy grant;
The ill, though asked, deny."

April 23.

***We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*—Rom. viii. 28.**

DO I love God, as it is that feeling which makes every providence easy to bear? Am I not prone to think of my trials apart from my many blessings, forgetting that alike they will "work together for good"? Do I try to rest passive in my Father's hands, not seeking to make fruitless inquiries into His counsels?

"We see sorrow; the end of His counsel and working lieth hidden and underneath the ground, and therefore we cannot believe."—*Rutherford.*

"Either directly or indirectly, every providence has a tendency to the spiritual good of those who love God; breaking them off from sin, bringing them nearer to God, weaning them from the world, fitting them for heaven."—*Matthew Henry.*

"And when I'm to die—Receive me, I'll cry,
For Jesus has loved me—I cannot tell why:
But this I can find—we two are so joined,
He'll not be in glory, and leave me behind."

April 24.

***In all things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.*—Rom. viii. 37.**

DOES my patient bearing of the cross of Christ show that I am a conqueror over the world, the flesh, and the devil? Do I remember that in this fight I lose nothing that is worth keeping, but gain many priceless results? Do I feel that the love of Christ takes the sting out of all my troubles; that the Spirit of His grace strengthens me, and enables me to bear all with courage and constancy? Do I feel that I conquer not in my strength, but in the grace of Jesus Christ?

"There are depths of love in Christ beyond what we have seen, therefore dig deep, and labour, and take pains for Him; and set by as much time in the day for Him as you can. He will be won with labour."—*Rutherford.*

"God's thoughts are love, and Jesus is
The loving voice they find;
His love lights up the vast abyss
Of the Eternal Mind."—*Paxton Hood.*

[redacted]

April 25.

He will finish the work.—ROM. ix. 28.

I feel depressed and cast down, because of sin which is ever rampant, ever seeking to gain the ascendency? Do I fear lest God may get wearied, me to fight the battle alone. Then let me take 'rom this promise, "He will finish the work." all one instance in which the Lord began a work, t incomplete? Do I look to Christ alone for the of the work of grace within, or to any other? in Jesus is the trust and reliance of the heart on elp and deliverance."—*Venn.*

would little faith fail through temptation and ugh outward troubles, and inward weakness, and or Jesus. He begins it, and He sustains it. He ithin us a weak and tender thing, when first we selves to be sinners, and learnt to look to Him. pt it ever since, and He will keep it to the end."

"Christ will complete what Christ begins,
To save from sorrows and from sins."

April 26.

onformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.—ROM. xii. 2.

VE I received a new heart and a new spirit? Is my understanding enlightened, my conscience softened, my will bound to the will of God, my purified and sanctified? Do I use the means d has given and appointed for this necessary trans- of soul, remembering that it is God alone who and we are turned, but that we must frame our turn? (Hos. v. 4.)

d, the world troubleth us, and is loved. What e do if it were quiet? How wouldst thou cleave r, who so embracest the foul! How wouldst thou e flowers thereof, who pluckest not thy hand thorns!"—*Augustine.*

"As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed;
So earthly pleasures fade away
When Jesus is revealed."

April 27.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.—Rom. xii. 3.

DO I endeavour to think humbly of myself, not to have too high an opinion of my judgment, ability, and performances? Do I seek to check self-conceit—esteeming my own wisdom and attainments above any other, thinking myself to be something? (Gal. vi. 3.)

"It is the peculiarity of the Christian religion, that humility and holiness increase in equal proportions."

"Avoid the habit of speaking humbly of yourself, as a snare of the adversary. Can you bear not to speak of yourself at all? That is the question."—*Howels.*

"In stooping, higher shall we reach
Than e'en the highest point our hearts can reach—
Even, dear Lord, to Thee,
Whose lowliness hath raised us to such height,
That we may dare to touch Thy garments white,
Of matchless purity."

April 28.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.—Rom. xii. 15.

DO I seek to cultivate a spirit of sympathy towards all men, especially towards God's afflicted people? Do I try to interest myself in the sorrows and joys of others, and make them mine? Do I try not to envy those who prosper, but to rejoice with them; to be truly glad that others have the success and comfort which I may not have; to be always ready to help, whether it be pleasing to me or not?

"Either take Christ into your lives, or cast Him out of your lips."—*Dyer.*

"Be Christ-like, 'who went about doing good;' raise the fallen, strengthen the weak, comfort the feeble-minded: and let it be your mission and privilege to 'weep with them that weep.'"—*Winslow.*

"Oh, may our sympathizing breast
That gen'rous pleasure know,
Freely to share in other's joy,
And weep for other's woe."

[redacted]

April 29.

It is high time to wake out of sleep.—ROM. xiii. 11.

HAVE I awakened to the fact that I have an immortal soul to care for, and to be prepared for eternity? Have I started from the sleep of sinful security to a life of earnest activity for myself and others? Do I remember that *now* is the accepted time, that I have no promise for a future time? Do I realize that I have a great deal of work to do, in a limited, uncertain time? Do I realize that I am in the midst of temptation and snares, and should therefore be awake?

"The word of command to all Christ's disciples is, Watch. *Awake*, be concerned about your souls and your eternal interests; take heed to that which is good, and live in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Serve God before the world: let Him not go
Until thou hast a blessing; then resign
The whole unto Him, and remember who
Prevailed by wrestling ere the sun did shine:
Pour oil upon the stones; weep for thy sin,
Then journey on, and have an eye to heaven!"

April 30.

None of us liveth to himself.—ROM. xiv. 7.

WHAT is the end and aim of my life—is it self, or God? Have I learned to deny myself, and live for the happiness and welfare of others? Do I remember that the influence of my life for good or evil must bear, more or less, on those around me? Is it ever present to me, that the business of a Christian's life consists, not in seeking to please himself, but in pleasing God?

"The testimony of a holy life is a still more veritable and impressive one than even that of a happy death."—*James.*

"Men's mid-day cold and wise courses in godliness, and their neighbour-like cold and wise pace to heaven, will cause many a man to want his lodging at night, and lie in the fields."—*Rutherford.*

"Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is, 'Freely give:'
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learned to live."—*Keble.*

May 1.

Christ pleased not Himself.—Rom. xv. 3.

THOUGHT not the self-denial of the Lord Jesus to be the most powerful and the most effective argument against selfishness in His followers. Do I consult my own comfort, ease, and pleasure, before that of others? Is self and self's doings first or second in my thoughts? Do I try to copy the self-renunciating, self-displeasing life, which my Saviour led for others? Am I humble, ready to consider others before myself?

"Study the excellent lesson of self-denial, self-annihilation. A true Christian is like a vine, that cannot stand of itself, but is wholly supported by the prop on which it leans. It is no small thing to know ourselves to be nothing, of no might, no worth, no understanding; to see ourselves helpless, empty shadows."—*Alleine.*

"It was no path of flowers
Through this dark world of ours,
Beloved of the Father, Thou didst tread;
And shall we in dismay
Shrink from the narrow way,
When clouds and darkness are around it spread?"

May 2.

The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. xvi. 20.

DOES this gracious promise quicken and encourage me; at the same time remembering that it is given, not to supersede my watchful care and strenuous endeavours for conquest? Do I come to God, not only as a God of power, but also of peace? Have I not more than once found that when Satan seemed to have prevailed, and all strength of resistance seemed gone, God has come to my rescue, putting Satan under my feet?

"A Christian, who lives here among his enemies, should never stir abroad without his guard. If you follow Satan, you will find the tempter prove a tormentor; if you follow the Spirit, you will find the Counsellor prove a Comforter."—*Mason.*

"I need Thy presence every passing hour—
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!"—*F. H. Lyte.*

[redacted]

May 3.

If any man love God, the same is known of Him.—1 Cor. viii. 3.

DOES my love to God make me love the things which He commands, and the people whom He loves? Do I remember, that while I may appear to the eye of man to love God, yet He alone, who can judge of the motives of actions, knows whether I love Him or not with a pure, unselfish love? Do I realize that if I love God, I must also love His people? and that they who, for His sake, love them and seek their welfare, are most likely to be beloved and approved of God?

"If thou neglectest thy love to thy neighbour, in vain thou professest thy love to God: for by thy love to God the love to thy neighbour is begotten; and by the love to thy neighbour, thy love to God is nourished."—*Quarles.*

"I love my God; but with no love of mine,
For I have none to give.
I love Thee, Lord; but all the love is Thine,
For by Thy love I live:
I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
Emptied and lost, and swallowed up in Thee."—*Guignon.*

May 4.

So run, that ye may obtain.—1 Cor. ix. 24.

AM I standing still, or hastening forward on my Christian race? Am I running with a firm determination to win the incorruptible crown? Do the things of earth drag me backward, and am I willing to be turned back? Do I remember that, while urging others to win the race, I may miss it myself; and that, to avoid this, I must be ever on the watch to keep my body under, praying for strength to overcome the many *halting* temptations of the way?

"Give us more earnestness in seeking to rescue sinners from impending judgment, and keep us waiting and watching for the dawn of that long-expected day, when we shall see Thee as Thou art, be transformed into Thine image, and be with Thee for ever."

"Let the present moment pass
With a blessing on its head;
And as Time metes out his glass
While our sands are numbered,
Use the present—
Soon 'twill sleep with ages fled."

May 5.

His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.
1 Cor. xv. 10.

IF there be any good in me, do I ascribe it to Divine grace? Do I remember that it belongs to Deity alone to say, "I am that I am;" and that it is my privilege to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" that I am nothing but what God makes me? Do I acknowledge that all that is good in me comes from God; and does that conviction make and keep me humble? Do I prayerfully seek to cherish and exert this grace, that it be not in vain, either for myself or others?

"I am not what I ought to be; I am not what I wish to be; I am not what I hope to be; but, by the grace of God, I am not what I was."—*J. Newton.*

"A humble spirit is commonly a gracious one."—*Matthew Henry.*

"All that I *was*—my sin, my guilt,
My death, was all my own;
All that I *am* I owe to Thee,
My gracious God, alone."

May 6.

We also believe, and therefore speak.—2 Cor. iv. 13.

DO I find that the grace of faith is a sovereign cordial and powerful antidote against fits of dark depression when troubles threaten and surround? Do I realize the sustaining power of faith in supporting the soul under the pressure of outward trial or inward temptation? Do I endeavour to impart of my faith to others, and to lead them to become partakers of the same blessing?

"Faith is not a sense, nor sight, nor reason, but a taking God at His word."—*Evans.*

"As we receive help and encouragement from the good words and examples of others, so should we be most careful to give a good example to others."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Gracious Spirit, dwell with me,
I myself would gracious be;
And with words that help and heal,
Would Thy life in mine reveal;
And with actions bold and meek,
Would for Christ, my Saviour, speak."—*Lynch.*

May 7.

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. iv. 17.

WHEN God sees fit to afflict me, do I endeavour to look forward to that eternal weight of glory, which, by comparison, makes present suffering light? Does this anticipation help me to rest quiescent in my Father's hands, confident that when He sees that patience has worked her perfect work, in purifying my sin-stained soul for the inheritance of the saints in light, He will remove the trial?

"In heaven all God's servants will be abundantly satisfied with His dealings and dispensations, and see how all conduced, like so many winds, to bring them to their haven, and how even the roughest blast helped to bring them homeward."—*Mason.*

"Oh, what pleasures there await us!
There the tempests cease to roar;
There it is that they who hate us
Shall molest our peace no more.
Trouble ceases
On that tranquil, happy shore."

May 8.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.
2 Cor. v. 10.

DO I realize the certainty of the approaching judgment-day? Do I realize its universality—that all must appear, from the hoary-headed to the infant of days? Do I cling to the false hope that even then the Judge of all the earth may have mercy on me, forgetful that the portals of the grave shut out for ever such hope—that as death finds, so it leaves? But if I have come to Jesus, why need I fear? He has washed away my sins; He will be a covert in that day of storm.

"Every day you live, every hour of your life, brings you a step nearer to that judgment throne. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

"May we all walk in humble faith and humble chastening fear,
See with calm and steadfast eye the Judge of all the earth appear;
Prepared to join the adoring throng before the throne of God,
Redeemed and freed from sin and death by Christ's atoning blood."

May 9.

***If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*—2 Cor. v. 17.**

AM I become a new creature in Christ Jesus? Have I not only a new name, but a new heart and a new nature? Have old thoughts, old principles, and old practices passed away? Has regenerating grace created a new world, new principles, new rules, and new ends in my soul? Can I say with truth that my old desire for sin has passed away? Are the ways of peace pleasant to me?

"Without the blood of Christ upon thy conscience, all thy services are dead."—*Wilcox.*

"There are three things a true Christian desires with respect to sin: 1st, Justification, that it may not condemn; 2nd, Sanctification, that it may not reign; 3rd, Glorification, that it may not be."

"Sought out by grace, brought back I am,
Saved by the merits of the Lamb;
And now, O Christ, myself I see,
In Adam lost, restored in Thee."

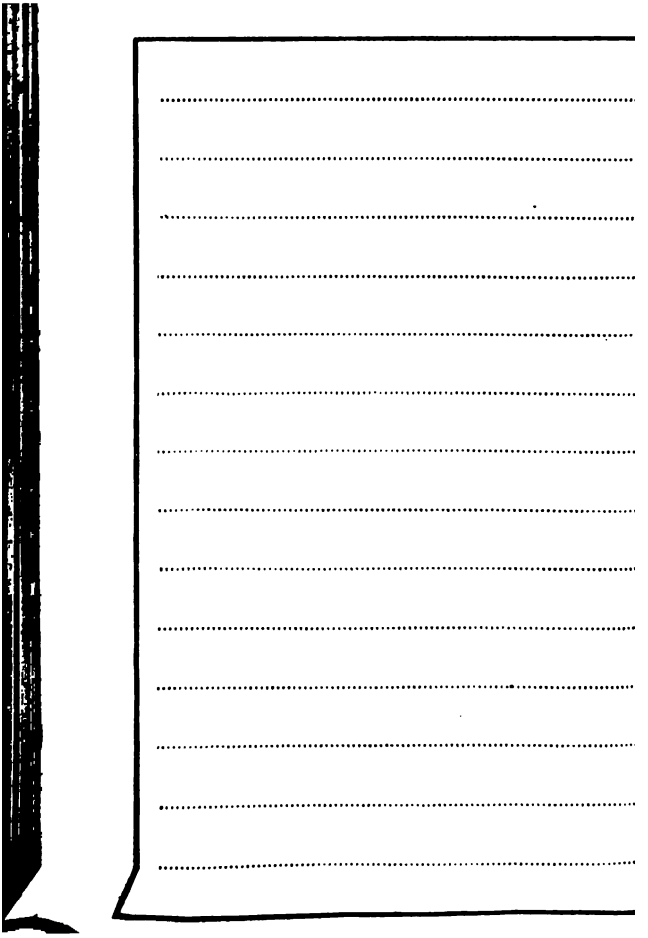
May 10.

Be ye reconciled to God.—2 Cor. v. 20.

GOD is willing to be reconciled to me; am I willing to be reconciled to Him? Do I realize that reconciliation is the great end of the gospel—that sinners should lay aside their enmity against God? Though our being enemies to God does not affect his greatness or glory, yet in His Word, through His ministers, He condescends to entreat and beseech us to be reconciled to Him, to be no longer His enemies. Can any resist such condescension? Do I remember that it is only through Jesus Christ that I can become reconciled to God?

"I cannot commit sin, but I must set my foot on my Maker's laws. I cannot gratify my lusts, but I go over my bleeding Saviour. Away then, foul tempter!"—*Gurnall.*

"Surely Christ thy sins hath borne;
Weeping soul, no longer mourn;
View Him bleeding on the tree,
Pouring out His life for thee;
There thy every sin He bore—
Weeping soul, lament no more."



May 11.

Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.—2 Cor. vii. 10.

DO I realize that godly sorrow and humiliation are the antecedents, and are necessary to repentance, and that both are from God? Has my sorrow for sin wrought repentance not to be repented of? Has it wrought "indignation" at sin, at myself? Has it wrought "fear"—a fear of distrust; not distrust of God, but of myself? Has it wrought a "vehement desire" after thorough reformation, and a desire to be at peace with God?

"The difference between true and false repentance is as great as that between the running of water in the paths after a violent shower, and the streams which flow from a living fountain."—*Venn.*

"The angels from their thrones of light,
And saints who have their robes made white
In blood of their dear Lord,
Joy with fresh joy for every sigh
The broken spirit sends on high,
For trait'rous sin abhorred."

May 12.

Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.—2 Cor. x. 5.

DO I endeavour to crucify the sinful inclinations of my heart, and keep under control my temper? Do I seek to enlighten my ignorance on spiritual matters by going to God for light? Do I endeavour to bring into captivity vain imaginations, proud reasonings, high thoughts of self's wisdom, by which Satan seeks to obtain a dwelling-place in my heart? Am I desirous that the gospel should level all that exalts itself against God?

"The happiness of man consists not in an exemption from trials, but in having his will swallowed up in the will of God."

"If in our daily task our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask—
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To bring us daily nearer God."—*Keble.*

May 13.

There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. —2 Cor. xii. 7.

WHEN temptations press on my soul with the acuteness of thorns, and I am tempted to repine, shall I not remember that the Lord permits them, to try my faith and to keep me humble? When trials crowd round my path, shall I not seek for grace to help me to feel that my Father permits them, in order to keep down pride, to keep me from being unduly exalted, and to lead me out of myself and on to Jesus?

"Real Christian humility is a grace of the Spirit, and consequently has its seat in the heart."

"Humbleness of mind is gained more by believing on Christ than by dwelling upon our sins."

"Thou knowest I have a cross to bear;
The needful stroke Thou didst not spare,
To keep me near Thy side:
But when I see Thy chastening rod
In Thy pierced hand, my Lord, my God,
I feel so satisfied!"—*C. Wilkins.*

May 14.

Bear ye one another's burdens.—Gal. vi. 2.

DO I exercise forbearance and compassion towards those who have been overtaken in a fault, who have been betrayed into weakness through infirmity of some kind? Am I ready to sympathize, to help, in times of temptation or trouble; ever ready to speak the word of encouragement to the down-trodden, the word of warning to the thoughtless? Am I ready to bear with the infirmities of those around, as Christ has borne and does bear with me, without an unbecoming assumption of pride?

"A true friend divides the cares and doubles the joys of his brother in affection."

"Life affords but few opportunities of doing great services for others; but there is scarcely an hour of the day that does not afford us an opportunity of performing some little, it may be unnoticed, kindness."

"Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
Make the earth an Eden, like the heaven above."

[redacted]

May 15.

He is our peace.—EPH. ii. 14.

HAVE I accepted that peace which Christ my Saviour purchased for me on the cross? Am I at peace with God? Have I that sense of pardoned sin which alone can give peace? Am I seeking peace from any other source than from the "Author and the Giver of peace"? If I believe that Christ has power to forgive my sins, why do I not take the comfort to myself?

"Like a beautiful city at rest, calmly sleeping upon the waters; such is the Christian's peace."

"Peace is put for reconciliation and love: the peace bequeathed is peace with God, peace with one another, peace in our own bosoms—that seems to be especially meant; a tranquillity of mind arising from a sense of our justification with God."—*Matthew Henry.*

"I found this treasure at the cross;
And there to every kind
Of weary, heavy-laden souls,
Christ gives a quiet mind."

May 16.

Speaking the truth in love.—EPH. iv. 15.

DOES a fear of giving pain to others, or to myself, seal my lips in the presence of sin? Do I pray for strength, for heavenly strength, to overcome that shrinking fear which is God-dishonouring? Would I think that a friend acted as a friend, if I were suffered to fall into a pit, simply because a sudden check might startle me? Is it kind, then, for me to suffer a fellow-creature (it may be) to be lost eternally, when a word might arrest, because at the time it might not be thought kind? Is it not for me to do my duty *in love*, and leave the consequences with God?

"There is in every man's heart, as in a desk, a secret drawer; the only thing is, to find the spring, and open it."

"Truth is an excellent thing; yet it is requisite that we speak it in love, not in contention."—*Matthew Henry.*

"This above all: To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the day the night,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

May 17.

Be ye followers of God, as dear children.—EPH. v. 1.

AM I a follower of God? Am I a humble yet persevering imitator of my Divine Master? Do I seek to conform to His example, and to have His image restamped on my sinful heart? Do I seek to be holy as He is holy, merciful as He is merciful? Do I try to resemble Him in His great pardoning love, remembering that they who live in love dwell in God, and God in them? Do I try to become more Godlike in my every-day life?

"Christians are like children learning to write—they may never be able to write as perfectly as the engraving, yet, if they do the best they can, and daily improve, the master is pleased: so we must ever copy the Lord Jesus; and the truest scriptural perfection is to be *always aiming at perfection.*"

"Quiet, Lord, my froward heart;
Make me teachable and mild,
Upright, simple, free from art—
Make me as a weanèd child;
From distrust and envy free,
Pleased with all that pleases Thee."

May 18.

Redeeming the time.—EPH. v. 16.

DO I realize that it is the part of the real Christian earnestly to seek out and improve opportunities for doing good, and in that way to redeem the time? Do I watch against temptations, filling up the time with profitable employments, which is ever the surest preventive to temptation and evil thoughts? Do I look upon time as a talent committed to my care, to be improved to God's glory; or misspent and lost, to my eternal ruin?

"No man is a better merchant than he that lays out his time upon God, and his money upon the poor."—*Bishop Taylor.*

"Ignorance of our duty, and neglect of our souls, are evidences of the greatest folly; while an acquaintance with the will of God, and a care to comply with it, bespeak the best and truest wisdom."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Were man to live coeval with the sun,
The patriarch-pupil would be learning still;
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearned."—*Young.*

May 19.

God maketh my heart soft.—JOB xxiii. 16.

DO I pray to God daily, that my heart may not only be made soft, but kept soft? Do I watch against the deadening influence of the world and its allurements? When I read God's Word, and hear God's ministers, is my heart touched, or does it remain cold and lifeless? Does the approach of sin make my heart shrink?

"Gospel holiness includes a heart broken for sin, a heart broken off from sin, and a perpetual conflict with sin."—*Medley.*

"Pray for a soft heart and a retentive memory, and often speak together of the sermons you hear, and get them harrowed into your hearts, that Satan may be cheated, and your soul saved."—*M'Cheyne.*

"The heart to flesh again convert,
The veil of sin once more remove;
Drop Thy warm blood upon my heart,
And melt it with Thy dying love:
This rebel heart by love subdue,
And make it soft, and make it new!"—*Wesley.*

May 20.

What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.—JOHN xiii. 7.

AM I content to wait for this graciously promised revelation of present mysteries? Do I pray for perfect submission and trustfulness? Have I never found that after-events have proved the incomparable excellency of Almighty Wisdom; have I not seen that, had the prayer of my heart been granted, the end would not have justified my hopes? Is it not better for me to follow my Father's leadings than to seek a way for myself?

"That is a beautiful school of philosophy (though it has few disciples) which teaches man to say of many things, 'It may be so; and it may be otherwise. It is a point on which I only know that I do *not* know.'"

"A thread of gold hangs midway in the air;
'Oh, let me grasp the thread!' ye cry aloud.
It holds a naked sword behind the cloud:
Ye see not that, ye poor, impassioned hearts,
And struggle for it with your eager hands—
Shall God, the All-wise, answer your demands?"

May 21.

I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.—GEN. xxxi

ARE my prayers importunate, as Jacob's wrest with God? Is my Father's blessing the first chief desire of my heart? Do I importune fo blessing of the Lord, as I would for an earthly favou blessing? Do I still continue in prayer—even when answer does not come, is delayed? Can I feel that heavenly Father knows what is the best answer to give, the best time in which to give it?

"Never think that God's delays are God's denials. on—hold fast—hold out."

"Those that would have the blessing of Christ must good earnest, and be importunate for it, as those tha solve to have no denial. It is the fervent prayer that i effectual prayer."—*Matthew Henry.*

> "I know Thee, who Thou art, Thou Holy One;—
> Oh, leave me not—Thou shalt not leave me—I
> Will grasp Thy sacred mantle with the hand
> Of faith, and wrestle with Thee till I die."—*Hatch.*

May 22.

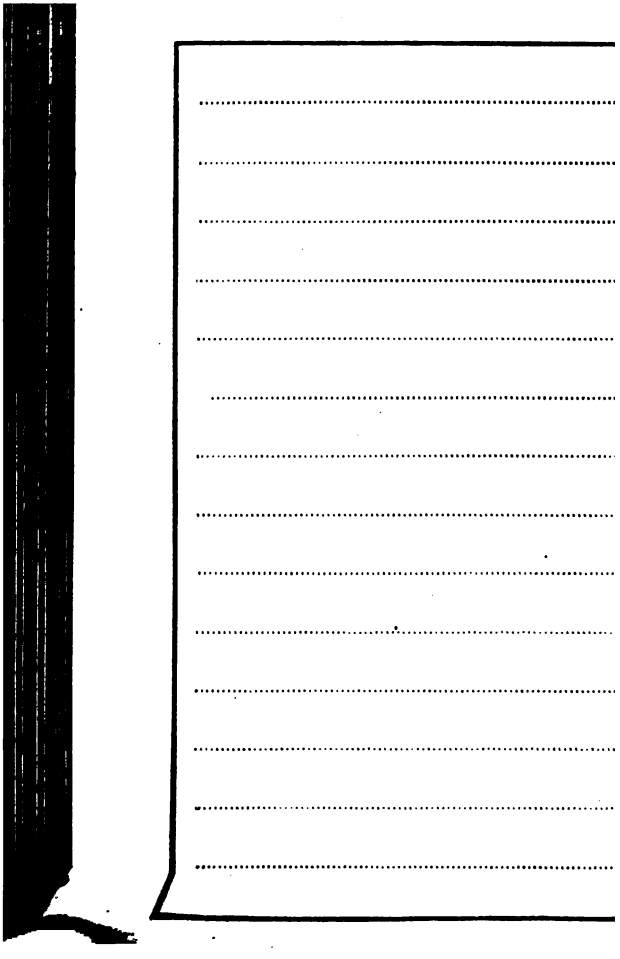
In your patience possess ye your souls.—LUKE xxi. 1

DO I remember that it is my duty to keep the pass and emotions of my heart under control? endeavour to cultivate patience? Am I pat under rebuke, not answering again? Am I patient u provocation, remembering Him who, when He was rev reviled not again? Am I patient in adversity, ready to the Lord's time for my deliverance?

"Christ went to heaven with many a wrong; His vi and countenance was all marred, more than the sons of You may not be above your Master."—*Rutherford.*

"In suffering times, set patience upon the guard for preserving of your souls; by it keep out all those im sions which would ruffle you and put you out of tempe

> "It is indeed a precious thing,
> When patience in us dwelleth,
> And, firm in God's eternal love,
> Of glad submission telleth."—*German.*



May 23.

Be ye thankful.—Col. iii. 15.

O I seek out matter for thankfulness? When God sends trial, do I permit it to overcloud past mercies; or do I endeavour to take from the past ful courage for the future? When I receive blessings, er unexpected or otherwise, do I render thanks to Almighty Giver? Is it not possible for a thankful to find light in darkness?

e enjoys much who is thankful for little. A grateful s a great mind."—*Secker.*

stead of envying one another upon the account of any ular favours and excellence, be thankful for His s which are common to all men."

"Give thanks in everything!
For the cross He bids thee bear,
For the flowers beside thy path that spring,
For the thorns that wound thee there;
For the sunshine on the way,
That makes thy journey sweet;—
For the gloom descends while yet 'tis day,
That urges on thy feet."

May 24.

Lord, save me.—Matt. xiv. 30.

O I feel my need of a Saviour? Do I realise that it is only when we feel that we are sinking that Christ stretches out His hand and sets us in ; and that now, as then, that hand is outstretched to s people? Do I remember that those who come to ; "He will in no wise cast out;" and that though He seem to let go His hold, it is but seeming—He will His own, till He place them beside Him?

nking times are praying times. It was only when looked at the waves, and heard the winds, that he

is the business of faith to resolve doubts, the doubts se, in a stormy day, so as even then to keep the head water. Could we believe more, we should doubt —*Matthew Henry.*

"Lord, I cannot let Thee go,
Till a blessing Thou bestow;
Do not turn away Thy face,
Mine's an urgent, pressing case."

May 25.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.—HEB. xii. 1.

IS there any special sin which drags my soul back when it would press forward and upward? Is it an inordinate love of the world and its frivolities? Is it a sin of temper, want of truthfulness, which the eye of man may not reach? Is it some dark sin, which is dear as a right eye, on which I would the curtain of oblivion might fall, and screen from the eye of Omnipotence? Do I pray that the Almighty may forgive, and give strength to root it out, that it clog my upward path no more?

"One sin, unmortified, may destroy the soul. One darling passion maintained, in spite of conscience, and sin still lives."

"Think that He, the All-discerning,
Knows each turning
Of thy path, each sinful stain;
Nay, what shame would fain gloss over,
Can discover;—
All thou dost to Him is plain."—*Lyra Germanica.*

May 26.

The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 JOHN i. 7.

HAVE I come to the fountain opened for uncleanness, and laved my guilty soul in its purifying flood? Do I feel in my inmost heart that I am a sinner, undone, lost for ever, unless the precious blood of my Redeemer be sprinkled on my soul? Have I confessed my guilt, knowing that that is absolutely necessary? Am I thankful for the inestimable blessings which that spilt blood confers on the penitent sinner?

"Christ's blood on the head is the greatest curse; Christ's blood on the heart is the richest blessing."

"Every man thinketh he is rich enough in grace till he taketh out his purse and telleth his money, and then he findeth his pack but poor and light in the day of trial."—*Rutherford.*

"He sank beneath His heavy woes,
To raise me to a crown;
There's ne'er a gift His hand bestows,
But cost His heart a groan."

May 27.

heart man believeth unto righteousness.—Rom. x. 10.

.S my profession of faith a deeper origin than that of the lips? Does my heart yield unfeigned assent to the revelation of the gospel concerning Christ ›ur? Do I realize that there must first be indwell- in the heart, before there can be a confession with .h acceptable to God? Does my faith go further understanding; does it take in the real, earnest, ınd strong consent of the will? Do I believe that ›ur's righteousness is mine?

h the heart!'—just the distinction between dead l that which is living. One is the belief of the *nding* only, the other the appropriation of the Wicked men and devils may have the one; true only can have the other."

> "By faith in Me the soul receives
> New life, though dead before;
> And he that in My name believes,
> Shall live to die no more."

May 28.

me to the Rock that is higher than I.—Ps. lxi. 2.

) I pray, like David, to be led to that Rock which is too high for me to reach through any exertions of my own? Do I realize that when, through ɜan plant my trembling footstops on that high hall be further out of the reach of my troubles, ɜace, than I can ever be through any strivings of ? Do I feel that God's power and promise are a ·her than I am, that the Rock is Christ, with whom l safety?

ɜ who have found God a shelter to them, ought ıve recourse to Him in all their straits."
Rock does not shake nor change, though the sea and flow round it."—*Rutherford.*

> "Bless'd is our lot, whate'er befall;
> Who can affright, or who appal?
> Since, as our Strength, our Rock, our All,
> Jesus, we cling to Thee!

May 29.

I am the Lord, I change not.—MAL. iii. 6.

DOES it bring to me comfort, when I remember that as the Lord Jehovah is immutable, so are His promises: He has promised to save me, therefore He will; He has promised to provide for the wants of His people, therefore He will; for He is unchangeable? Do I take warning from the fact that as the Lord is unchangeable in His words of comfort, so He is in His words of admonition, and of future punishment if disregarded?

"He who looks upon Christ through frames and feelings, is like one who sees the sun on water, which quivers and moves as the water moves; but he that looks upon Him in the glass of His Word by faith, sees Him ever the same."—*Nottidge.*

"Frames and feelings fluctuate;
These thy Saviour ne'er can be;
Love itself may oft abate;—
Learn thyself *in Christ* to see;
Then be feelings what they will,
Jesus is thy Saviour still!"

May 30.

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.—PROV. iv. 23.

DO I maintain a holy jealousy over my soul, guarding with sleepless vigilance all its avenues, whereby sin might find an entrance? Do I keep with "all keeping" (as the original is) my heart, by care, by strength, by calling in help from the Source of all help? Do I estimate sufficiently the results of this keeping, that they will redound to the glory of God, and the good of others—or otherwise? Do I remember that if the spring be impure, so must the stream be?

"As the virtue of a strong spirituous liquor evaporates by degrees in a bottle which is not closely stopped; in like manner the life and power of the Spirit insensibly vanishes away, if the heart be not thoroughly kept with diligence."—*Salter.*

"Thou art the light; the sunshine is from Thee;
And in Thy heart is strength and purity;
There lean our weary hearts, there ends our quest,
For there is perfect love and perfect rest."

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May 31.

it cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.—JOHN vi. 37.

O I realize the beauty and the fulness of the invitation, not given collectively merely, but individually, showing that my gracious Redeemer ınd calls His people by name? Do I take the invi- ı all its pure simplicity—to come to Christ, and to Him? Does His love draw me? Does my sense of d danger drive me to Him?

atan and I did strive for any word of God in all my ras for this good word of God in Christ—'Him that to me I will in no wise cast out;' he at one end, and other. Oh, what work we made! It was for this did so tug and strive: he pulled, and I pulled; but, praised, I overcame him."—*Rutherford.*

"Christ is earnest, bids thee come,
Paid thy spirit's priceless sum;
Wilt thou spurn thy Saviour's love,
Pleading with thee from above?"

June 1.

h me, O God, and know my heart.—Ps. cxxxix. 23.

S it my earnest desire that God may of His goodness show to me the concealed depths of sin, which might otherwise escape notice, and thereby gain rength each day? Do I try to keep back any sin ınfession in prayer, fancying that it can escape the ent eye of Deity? Is my desire for self-knowledge ? Do I ask the Lord that, as far as I am in the right, ld help me onward, believing that He who made and ny heart alone can keep it?

ı not so much the great sins that take the freshness ır conscience, as the numberless petty faults which ıll the while committing."—*Beecher.*
en sin lets us alone, we may let sin alone."

"Try us, O God, and search the ground
Of every evil heart;
Whate'er of sin is in us found,
Oh, bid it all depart!"

June 2.

Judge not.—John vii. 24.

DO I regard the conduct of others with the sar mercy as I hope God does and will look upon min When inclined to break this divine command, I remember that in so doing I dare to assume to myself office which alone belongs to God? Do I pray for a rig judgment in all things? Do I actively or passively sancti in others the discussion of my neighbour's affairs, either *look* or *word?* Do I take the part of the absent, and inste of bringing their faults before others, seek to speak, if n a good, at least a kind, word for them?

"Judge thyself with the judgment of sincerity, and th wilt judge others with the judgment of charity."

"Judge not: the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield."

June 3.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for eve
Heb. xiii. 8.

DO I practically believe in the unchangeableness my merciful Redeemer? Does that belief bri forth the comforting fruits of faith in the day darkness and trial? Do I remember that though my hea is changeful, its moods and feelings ever fluctuating, oft cold and often hard, yet that He, my Saviour, nev changes—His love is ever the same, immutable and fre Do I therefore endeavour to look away from uncertain s to Jesus the Rock?

"God's promises are from everlasting to everlasting, a He always stands up to them. There never was a run heaven that was not promptly met. No creature in all t world, or in lying, audacious hell, shall ever say that he dre a draft upon heaven, and that God dishonoured it."—*Beeche*

"Mine is an unchanging love:
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath;
Free and faithful, strong as death."

[redacted]

June 4.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!—ROM. xi. 33.

DO I, like the Apostle Paul, confessing myself at a loss to understand the magnitude of the knowledge and the love of God, and my inability to fathom its depths, sit down at its brink, low at His feet, and worship with thankfulness? Am I sensible of my own great weakness and nothingness, and that after all my searching, all my labours to enable me to search, I am as nothing—I know nothing, in comparison with the illimitable knowledge of God? Do I seek to use whatever knowledge I possess to the glory of God?

"The riches of divine grace may be compared to a richly-furnished cabinet, to which Christ is the door."

"Experience is the key with which to unlock many of the mysteries of Scripture."—*Newton.*

" For love of us He bled,
For love of us He died;
'Twas love that bowed His fainting head,
And pierced His sacred side."

June 5.

Pray without ceasing.—1 THESS. v. 17.

HAVE I stated times for prayer, not giving up because sometimes God delays the answer? Do I pray with earnestness, feeling that if I would that all should go right with my soul, I must never cease praying until that world is reached where prayer is swallowed up in praise? Do I remember that God neither expects nor wishes me to do nothing but pray, and so allow my everyday duties of life to be forgotten, but that all the concerns of earth should be held subordinate?

"The Christian is enjoined to 'pray without ceasing;' not that he can be always engaged in the positive act, but he ought to have *a holy aptitude of prayer*, so as to be prepared in an instant, when in danger or need, to fly for refuge to God."

" Say, what is prayer, when it is prayer indeed?
The mighty utterance of a mighty need:
The man is praying who doth press with might
Out of his darkness into God's own light."—*Tupper.*

June 6.

The meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.
Ps. xlix. 3.

IS it my earnest desire and prayer that the thoughts of my heart may be so regulated as to be of everlasting use to myself, as well as pleasing in God's sight? Is it my delight to think of the goodness of the Lord? Are my meditations such as are dictated by a thankful, or a dissatisfied spirit? Do I dwell on the Lord's dealings with me, and love to trace out His intents of mercy? Do I seek to put away unbecoming thoughts of folly and triviality?

"Meditation is prayer's handmaid, to wait on it, both before and after the performance. It is as the plough before the sower, to prepare the heart for the duty of prayer; and the harrow to cover the seed when it is sown."—*Gurnall.*

"My wisdom and my guide,
My counseller Thou art;
O let me never leave Thy side,
Or from Thy paths depart."

June 7.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.
LAM. iii. 22.

WHEN things are dark, and faith is weak, and the merciful experiences of the past are clouded, is it not helpful to reflect that the gift of eternal salvation will not and can not be taken away; and were that the only mercy left, its incomparable greatness must be a source of ceaseless praise? Do I feel that had I been dealt with as my sins deserved, I should have been consumed long since?

"If the mercies of God be not loadstones to draw us to heaven, they will be millstones to sink us to perdition."

"Whatever hard things we suffer, we must never entertain any hard thoughts of God, but must still be ready to own that He is both kind and faithful."—*Matthew Henry.*

"My soul, repeat His praise
Whose mercies are so great—
Whose anger is so slow to rise,
So ready to abate."—*Watts.*

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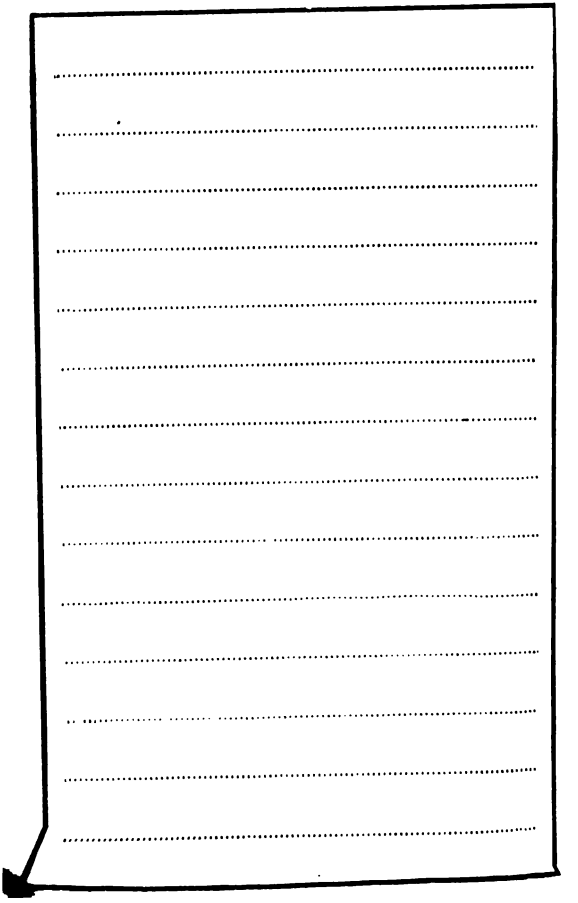


June 8.

delight to do Thy will, O my God.—Ps. xl. 8.

OES the doing of God's will give me pleasure? Do I seek to accommodate my will to the Divine will?

Do I pray that at all times, whether pleasing to ıot, I may be enabled to do God's good will and , feeling persuaded that it must be better than nce He knows all things, and has my wellbeing at Do I lay out my life in seeking to do good to others?

's people are travellers. Sometimes they are in dark d deep valleys; sometimes on the hills of joy, where ht and cheerful. Let them but follow, and He will —*A. Toplady.*

d-like obedience moves towards every command of the needle points that way which the loadstone If God calls to duties which are cross to flesh and ' we are children we obey our Father."—*Watson.*

"*Thy* way, not *mine*, O Lord,
However dark it be;
Lead me by Thine own hand—
Choose out the path for me."

June 9.

u that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise.—Mal. iv. 2.

AVE I found Jesus to my soul what the sun is to the visible world—light in the midst of darkness?

Am I anxious that that light should shine into my d dispel the clouds of darkness and ignorance? Do to lead others to that light? Is Jesus my great ın? Have I accepted His healing medicines, and ed myself to their salutary influence?

ver trusted God but I found Him faithful, nor my .rt but found it false."—*Dyer.*

: not toiling, but believing, that brings rest: it is not , but believing; it is not doing or suffering aught, ply believing that another has suffered and done. ough the cross that we find our way to the love of ıd *this* is rest."

"All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing."

June 10.

I have set the Lord always before me.—Ps. xvi. 8.

HAVE I set God before me in all my thoughts and acts, giving to Him the first place? Do I look upon God as my Chief Good and Highest End; my Owner, Ruler, and Judge; my gracious Benefactor, my sure Guide, and strict Observer? In so doing, have I not the comforting assurance that I can never be moved aside from the path of duty, nor lose the comforts of His presence? Is love the mainspring of my obedience?

"A soul sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey and what to reject, as hypocrites do. An obedient soul is like a crystal glass with a light in the midst, which shines through every part thereof."

"With heart, and eyes, and lifted hands,
For Thee I long, to Thee I look;
As travellers in thirsty lands
Pant for the cooling water-brook.
My life itself, without Thy love,
No taste of pleasure could afford;
'Twould but a tiresome burden prove
If I were banished from my Lord."

June 11.

Abide with us.—Luke xxiv. 29.

DO I desire that God's presence should bo in my heart? Have I prayed that my heart may become a fit habitation for the presence of a holy God? Have I an earnest desire to put far from me sin and its consequences? Do I hate the very appearance of evil? Do I desire to open the door of my heart to Christ? Am I shutting it to His gracious and repeated knockings? If Christ become weary and go away, what must become of me? Does the desire for my Saviour's friendship exceed all earthly considerations?

"Our happiness is secured in One who is not for one generation a present teacher and a living Lord, and then for all succeeding a past and a dead one; but who is, for all His people, in all ages, a living Saviour and a present Friend."

"Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;
The darkness thickens—Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!"

[redacted]

June 12.

They are without fault before the throne of God.—Rev. xiv. 5.

AM I living a life of present preparation for that future of sinless blessedness which awaits the child of God? Do I so rule my life that the nakedness of my soul may be hereafter covered with my Saviour's spotless righteousness? Have my sins been washed away with the Redeemer's blood? Does the thought and hope of future glory nerve me for perseverance in the fight against sin and Satan?

"Trials may abound, friends may fail, but faith beholds the Redeemer holding forth the golden crown, waiting to conduct the weary pilgrim to the land where sin and sorrow are unknown, and where, purified from the corruptions of the flesh, he shall reflect the glory of Jehovah for evermore."

"I shine in the light of God:
His likeness stamps my brow:
Through the valley of death my feet have trod,
And reign in glory now."

June 18.

Unto you which believe He is precious.—1 Peter ii. 7.

HAVE I a practical belief in my Saviour's redemptory power? Is that belief precious to me, ranking far above any earthly pleasure or enjoyment? Is Jesus Christ the very foundation-stone of all my hopes and happiness? Is He precious to me in the excellency of His nature, the grandeur of His office, and the inestimable value of His services when on earth and now in heaven? Have I come to this gracious Redeemer by faith in Him? Has my faith enabled me to take comfort in His finished work?

"The Lord takes none up but the forsaken, makes none healthy but the sick, gives sight to none but the blind, makes none alive but the dead, sanctifies none but sinners; and to all of these He is precious."—*Luther.*

"Thee to praise, and Thee to know,
Constitute our bliss below;
Thee to see, and thee to love,
Constitute our bliss above."

[redacted]

June 16.

***Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*—Heb. iv. 16.**

DOES not the graciousness and excellency of our High Priest impart encouragement to come boldly to the throne of grace? Do I come to this appointed place, where God promises to meet poor sinners with the rich treasures of His mercy? Does the word "throne" strike me with awe and reverence?—then let me remember that a "throne of grace" speaks encouragement even to the very chief of sinners. Do I ask for mercy to pardon all my sins, and grace to purify my soul?

"A holy boldness, a chastened familiarity, is the true spirit of right prayer. When God pours out His Spirit upon man, then man will pour out his heart before God. The breath of prayer comes from the life of faith."—*Mason.*

"'Mid wild despair, when tempests rage,
And storms of strife their conflicts wage,
A rest there is, serene retreat—
Beneath a Saviour's mercy-seat."

June 17.

***Put on the whole armour of God.*—Eph. vi. 11.**

DO I make use of all the weapons which God has provided for the Christian against the wiles of Satan? Do I aim at *all* grace, the *whole* armour, so that no part may be left vulnerable, exposed to temptation? Do I acknowledge that all this defensive armour is God's, not mine; that *I* have no armour which could be proof in a time of temptation?

"It is a device of Satan, to seduce men into a drowsy state, and then beguile them with some dream. When religion becomes irksome, then he presents some novelty which allures and deceives; whereas had we been prepared, we should have detected the deceit."—*Cecil.*

"Onward, Christians, onward go!
Join the war, and face the foe!
Faint not, much doth yet remain—
Dreary is the long campaign.

"Let your drooping hearts be glad;
March in heavenly armour clad;
Fight, nor think the battle long;
Victory soon shall tune your song."—*H. K. White.*

June 18.

***Blessed is the man that endureth temptation.*—JAMES i. 12.**

CAN I lay claim to the promised blessing for those who *endure* as well as *suffer*, who with patience and constancy go through all difficulties in the way of duty? Have I that love to God and the Lord Jesus Christ, which alone can give the endurance which is blessed? Do I remember that the tried Christian shall be a crowned one; that he only bears the cross for a while, but the crown throughout the long ages of eternity? Do I also remember that the future reward comes not as a debt, but by a gracious promise?

"There are no sins we can be tempted to commit, but we shall find a greater satisfaction in resisting than in committing."—*Mason.*

"Still nigh me, O my Saviour, stand,
And guard in fierce temptation's hour:
Hide in the hollow of Thy hand;
Show forth in me Thy saving power:
Still be Thine arm my sure defence,
Nor earth nor hell shall pluck me thence."

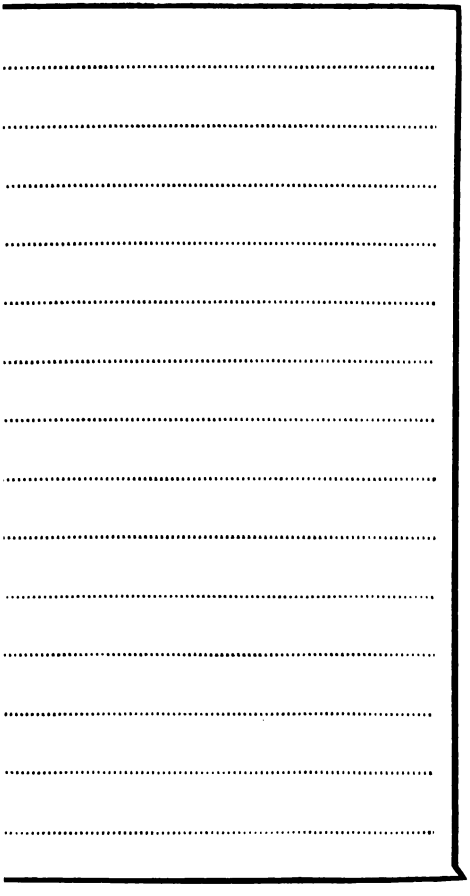
June 19.

***Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.*—MATT. x. 32.**

AM I ashamed to be found in the ranks of the Crucified One? Do I feel it to be my duty not only to believe in Christ, but to profess that belief? If I am ashamed of Christ now, how can I expect that hereafter He will acknowledge me, and present me as one of His redeemed, purchased ones, to His Father, when He sits upon His judgment throne?

"It is wonderful what strength of purpose and energy of will are communicated by the assurance that we are doing our duty. Many persons, timid and averse to incurring danger, will manfully brave every opposition in its discharge. They feel confident that God is able and willing to protect them; and should they fall, they know they will receive their reward."

"Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save."



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June 20.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.—Rev. iii. 20.

WHEN Christ knocks at my heart by His Word and Spirit, do I resist, or do I accept with gratitude the visit which redeeming love deigns to make me? Has Jesus ever knocked in vain at the door of my heart? Do I listen to the warning voice of conscience, which would fain keep me from adding sin to sin, and admit the gracious Knocker? Why cannot I accept the offer of free pardon held out to me? Do I prefer being Satan's willing slave, to having the Saviour for my Friend?

"How long Jesus seeks! How fain would He come in, and how glad would He be of lodging! The arm that hath knocked for more than five thousand years, aches not yet."—*Rutherford.*

"Oh, sinner, arouse thee! thy noontide is past,
Already the shadows are lengthening fast:
Escape for thy life, from the dark mountains flee;
The Lord of the vineyard *still* waiteth for thee."

June 21.

Before I was afflicted I went astray.—Ps. cxix. 67.

HAVE I ever found that when prosperity smiled upon me, and trouble kept in the background, the things of God and of eternity faded from my sight, and insensibly became of little moment to me? Have my afflictions humbled me for sin, and shown me the unsatisfying nature of the world? have they softened my heart, and opened it to the voice of God? Have troubles brought me, like the prodigal, first to myself, and then to my Father?

"God knoweth well how to use things, and will make us to be obliged to affliction, and to thank God who made us acquainted with such a rough companion to force us to Christ."—*Rutherford.*

"I ask not, 'Take away this weight of care;'
No, for that love I pray which all can bear;
And for the faith that whatsoe'er befall
Must needs be good, and for my profit prove,
Since from my Father's heart, most rich in love,
And from His bounteous hands, it cometh all."

June 22.

Hope maketh not ashamed.—ROM. v. 5.

WHY should I be ashamed of acknowledging a member in such a holy cause, with so Master, and so sure and well-grounded a If I am ashamed either of my hope in God, or of su in His cause, then the love of God can have no du place in my heart. Do I remember that this ho never deceive me, having the promise of the life th is, and of that which is to come?

"I have such a hope, that with it I can plung eternity."—*A. Fuller.*

"Experience of God is a prop to our hope. He th delivered, doth and will. Experience of ourselves h evidence our sincerity."—*Matthew Henry.*

"Faint and sinking on my road,
Still I cling to Thee, my God;
Bending 'neath a weight of woes,
Harassed by a thousand foes,
Hope still chides my rising fears,
Joys still mingle with my tears."

June 23.

Draw me, we will run after Thee.—CANT. i. 4.

IS the grace of God in my heart compelling run in His holy way and commandments? endeavouring to keep close to my Father steadfastly resisting the allurements of the world, th and the devil? Is it my earnest desire not only to wa to *run*, in the way of God, with eagerness of int readiness of affection, strength of pursuit, and swift motion? Do I seek diligently to improve the grace God has given me?

"The flowing of the soul after Christ, and its read pliance with Him, are the effects of His grace: we not run after Him if He did not draw us. When Ch His Spirit draws us, we must with our spirits run Him."

"Bought with Thy service and Thy blood,
We doubly, Lord, are Thine:
To Thee our lives we would devote,
To Thee our death resign."—*Doddridge.*

June 24.

ned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.—PHIL. iv. 11.

ask for strength from Christ to enable me to be ntent in every condition? Am I content with ıat I have, though it may not realize my desires? ıt to leave the morrow and its cares with my ing satisfied with the knowledge that He will me? Am I content to bide His gracious time, nd of sickness is upon me, feeling assured that His glory, and my good, He will raise me up, y not remove me hence until my work is done? trying occurrence, I represent to myself its ıilities; and as many of these as I do not realize so much gain. In this way contentment is not *Bengel.*

"Let us, then, in every station,
Humbly strive to do our part,
With a faithful, earnest spirit,
And a meek, contented heart."

June 25.

Behold, he prayeth.—ACTS ix. 11.

ſ I kneel down to pray, can my Father, who ıows all things, say of me, as of the penitent ul, that I pray, pray with earnestness and con- in? Do I remember that it is as impossible for to exist (spiritually) without prayer, as for the ı without breath? Do I endeavour to impress that to be prayerless is to be graceless?

ıolutions (as some call them), without grace, are ıpon steel, which quickly flies off and vanishes *pplegate Lectures.*

will make us leave off praying, or praying will ve off sinning."—*Dyer.*

ɔd has promised we must pray for; He will be and particularly for Divine instruction."— *ıry.*

"O Thou by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray."

June 26.

Be kindly affectioned one to another.—Rom. xii. 10.

HAVE I that true and pure affection which spr from a heart imbued with love to God? D cultivate a spirit of courteousness to every with whom I come in contact? Am I willing to stoo the meanest offices of kindness for those around me? I the law of love constrain my actions; does it instigate motives; does it point my words? Am I kindly affectic at home, as well as abroad?

"Civility is a charm that attracts the love of all n and too much is better than to show too little."—*Bi Horne.*

"This kind of affection puts us on to express oursel both in word and action, with the utmost courtesy obligingness that may be."—*Matthew Henry.*

> "Teach me to live! with kindly words for all,
> Wearing no cold, repulsive brow of gloom;
> Waiting with cheerful patience, till Thy call
> Summon my spirit to her heavenly home."

June 27.

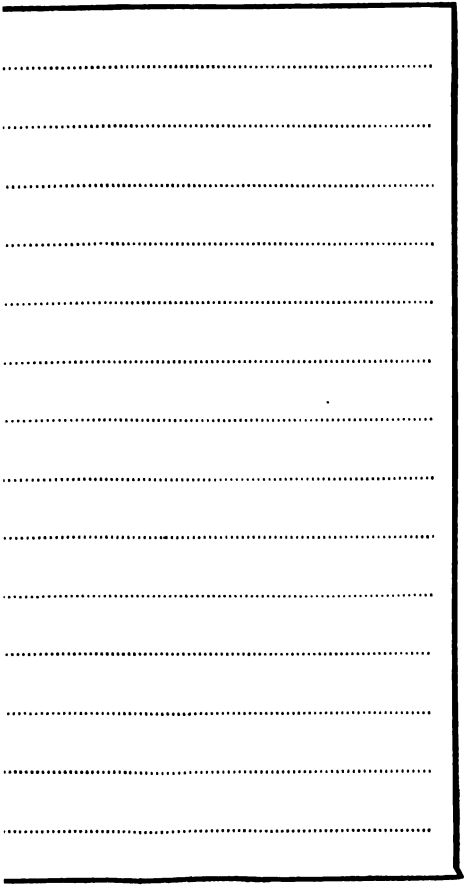
I am the way, the truth, and the life.—John xiv. 6.

AM I willing to look upon Jesus as my Way? S by His holy teaching and example He teache my duty, and by His merit and ceaseless inte sion He procures me present and eternal happiness, th fore He is the Way, the Way that leads to rest. I accept Jesus as the Truth, that which is opposed to f hood and error, feeling persuaded that I need search none other than the truth as it is in Jesus? Is Jesus Life of my soul—the beginning, the middle, and the e He through whom I set out, go on, and finish?

"Besides this way, Christ, there is no way, but wan ing; no verity, but hypocrisy; no life, but eternal des —*Luther.*

"God hath many fair flowers, but the fairest of all flo is Christ."—*Rutherford.*

> "Let me walk with Christ below,
> In His likeness daily grow;
> Follow Him, and run my race,
> Daily nourished by His grace."



June 28.

***I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.*—Isa. xliv. 22.**

HAVE I come to God for that pardon which blots out and dissipates the dark cloud which separates the soul from Him? Why should I not accept the comfort which the knowledge of sin pardoned is designed to give—why should I still wander in heaviness, as if my sins were unpardoned? Do I not believe that God looks down upon the pardoned soul with favour, and that the sins of the past, having been blotted out with Christ's blood, are forgotten by Him, cast behind His back?

"If believers have uneasiness about past sins, as though they were still imputed, they are undervaluing the perfectly finished work of Christ, and doubting God's veracity."

"Arrayed in mortal flesh,
He like an angel stands,
And holds the promises
And pardons in His hands;
Commissioned from His Father's throne
To make His grace to mortals known."

June 29.

***I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.*—Hos. ii. 14.**

DO I realize that it is those for whom God has mercy in store that He brings into the wilderness of trial, into quiet, that they may there learn to commune with their heavenly Father? Does it give me encouragement, to know that when the enforced quiet has done its appointed work, God will then speak comfortably to the repentant soul, and give His peace?

"Whilst thou art passing on through the wilderness, from the gate of hell where thou wast, to the gate of heaven where thou art going, God has strewed thy path with promises, as with flowers from His own paradise."—*Bunyan.*

"Till death the weary spirit free,
My God hath said, 'Tis good for thee
To walk in faith, and not by sight.'
Take it on trust a little while;
Soon shalt thou read the mystery right,
In the full sunshine of His smile."—*J. Keble.*

June 30.

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which w lost.—LUKE xix. 10.

DO I realize that our gracious Redeemer left t bosom of His Father to seek on earth for th who were not worth seeking, who did not se Him, nor ask to know Him? Am I one of those lost on Do I thankfully acknowledge my Saviour's power to sa Am I willing to be brought back to the fold? Am I ti of wandering?

"For whom did Christ die? For sinners—for the great sinners—for the chief of sinners. A dying Christ for a de ing Peter! A crucified Christ for a crucified thief!"—*Weight.*

"Though all around may frown on the vilest sinner, s within an accusing conscience may condemn, the gospel Christ invites him to return to God, against whom he sinned; telling him that there is forgiveness with Him."

"My sins on Christ were laid,
He bore the mighty load;
The ransom *price* He fully paid
In groans, and tears, and blood."

July 1.

Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye sh not enter into the kingdom of heaven.—MATT. xviii. 3.

AM I like a little child, careful for nothing, leav all in my heavenly Father's hands, satisfied t He knows and does best? Is my temper gen inoffensive, conciliatory, submissive, amenable to adv slow to take offence? Am I humble as a little child, tea able—not inclined to take airs upon myself; unassuming manner, kind to all, whether my friends or otherwise?

"Heaven's gates are not so highly arched as prin palaces: they that enter them must enter them upon th knees."

"Our aspirations should always be, 'More of Chr none but Christ.'"

"These pleasures now no longer please,
No more delight afford:
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Now I have known the Lord."

[redacted]

July 2.

There is.....one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 Tim. ii. 5.

DO I look to Christ Jesus alone for salvation? Have I dismissed from my mind all ideas of salvation through any other source, or through any imaginary righteousness of my own? Is there any hidden feeling in my heart, that, in some way or other, I must do something towards my salvation? Do I imagine that, before God accepts a sinner, he must bring with him a certain amount of repentance, or good deeds of some kind?

"If you seek to divide the work of salvation with any other, whether in heaven or earth, you thereby seek to rob Christ of his glory as the only and all-sufficient Saviour; and for this wickedness you will suffer the judgment of God, for God is jealous of the glory of Jesus."

"Jesus, my great High Priest,
Offered His blood and died:
My guilty conscience seeks
No sacrifice beside.
His powerful blood did once atone,
And now it pleads before the throne."

July 3.

Woe unto them that are at ease!—Amos vi. 1.

AM I allowing the things of time to outweigh the things of eternity? Are the pleasures of the world winding themselves too tightly round my soul? Do I endeavour to live a life of activity, so as to allow Satan no loophole for the entrance of his temptations? Do I cheat myself—insensibly or otherwise—with the idea that the future presents opportunities enough for repentance?

"The richest are oftentimes the poorest, and the poorest are oftentimes the richest. O how many threadbare souls are there to be found under silken coats and purple robes!" —*Dyer.*

"A proud heart and a lofty mountain are never fruitful." —*Gurnall.*

"Be wise *to-day;* 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead:
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the merits of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene."—*Young.*

If ye will ...

ISA. vii. 9.

IF I do not believe in what God says, how
pect that my doubts can be set at rest,
can have peace of mind? How can I ex
the rich mines of comfort with which the Wor
abounds can display their unbounded treasure
cankered eye of a doubting soul? Do I realize
grace of faith in the heart is absolutely necessar
peace and composure of the mind in the many tria
life, and that it can and does give peace?

"The sin of unbelief is that which besets the si
than his ways. Now, sinner, let me tell thee, if
entertain these unbelieving thoughts, thou tra
Christ's command, abidest thine own tormentor,
est thyself from establishment in grace."—*Bunya*

"Lord, I believe
Thy written Word—that those who come to T
In no wise wilt Thou them cast out. O then,
Receive Thou me!"

July 5.

He cannot deny Himself.—2 TIM. ii. 13

OUGHT not this gracious re-assurance
mises of the immutable God to set at r
all doubting thoughts? Have I taken
word, and come to Him with my load of unpard
... He has said it. He will never tu

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July 6.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve.—JOSH. xxiv. 15.

HAVE I made religion my serious and deliberate choice? Have I chosen between God and the world? Does that "better part" belong from choice to me, which can never be taken away? Does the fact of having to take up my cross daily make the thought of religion unpleasant to me? then am I looking forward to a future crown? Can I hesitate between the things of time and of eternity? Do I pray for strength to make this momentous choice while it is called to-day?

"Let us resolve upon a life of serious godliness, not merely because we know no other way, but because upon search we find no better."—*Matthew Henry.*

"'Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,
And sin is here;
Our age is but the falling of a leaf—
A dropping tear.
We have not time to sport away the hours;
All must be earnest in a world like ours."

July 7.

In His favour is life.—Ps. xxx. 5.

DO I desire the favour of God more than the favour of man? Is it my prayerful endeavour so to order my life that the full sunlight of the Lord's favour may shine on my soul? Have I not realized, in the day of trial, that the favour of the Lord has been most reviving and supporting, while without it the soul remained dark and desponding? When the Lord withdraws the light of his countenance from his children, must there not be a cause?—and is it not well to investigate what that cause may be, that all may be right again?

"Man's religion is a fancied means of securing the favour of God; God's religion is the holy life of one who through faith has obtained that favour at the very outset, and who walks along in the happy consciousness of acceptance in Christ, and in the calm enjoyment of God's assured love."

"Build to-day; then, strong and sure,
On a firm and ample base,
And ascending and secure,
Shall to-morrow find its place."

July 8.

Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.
ROM. V. 20.

DOES this view of the limitless grace of God give me comfort—that the enormity of sin can never prevent the sinner's acceptance, let him but repent? Do I watch over myself lest there should unawares creep in, through the very superabundance of mercy, a laxity of feeling, a less strenuous warfare against the wiles and machinations of Satan? Do I remember that the stream of grace and righteousness is broader than the stream of guilt, and that no *repentant* sinner can lave within its waters and come forth unpurified?

"When Satan charges sin upon the conscience, then for the soul to charge it upon Christ, this is gospel-like. Christ serves for this very end."—*Wilcox.*

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!"—*C. Elliott.*

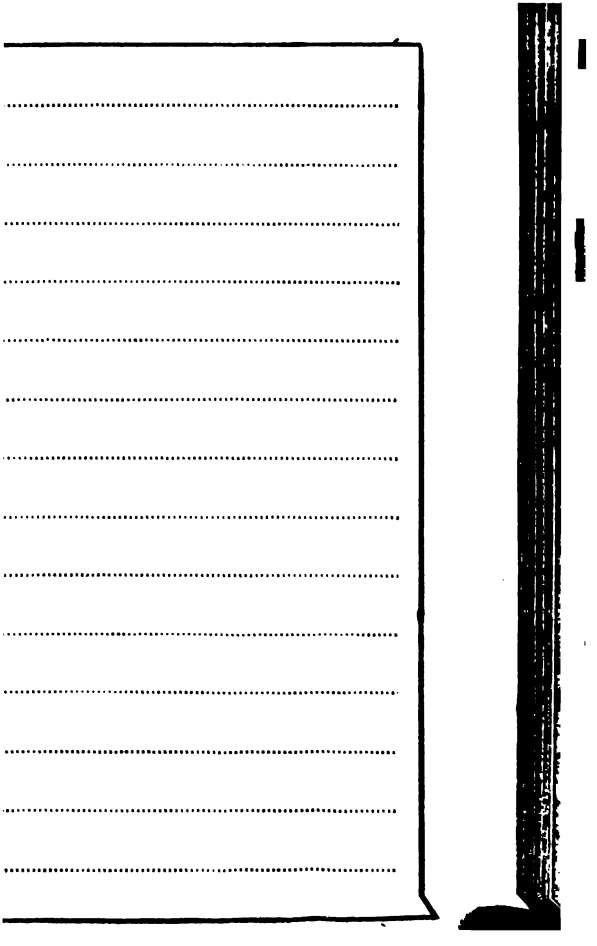
July 9.

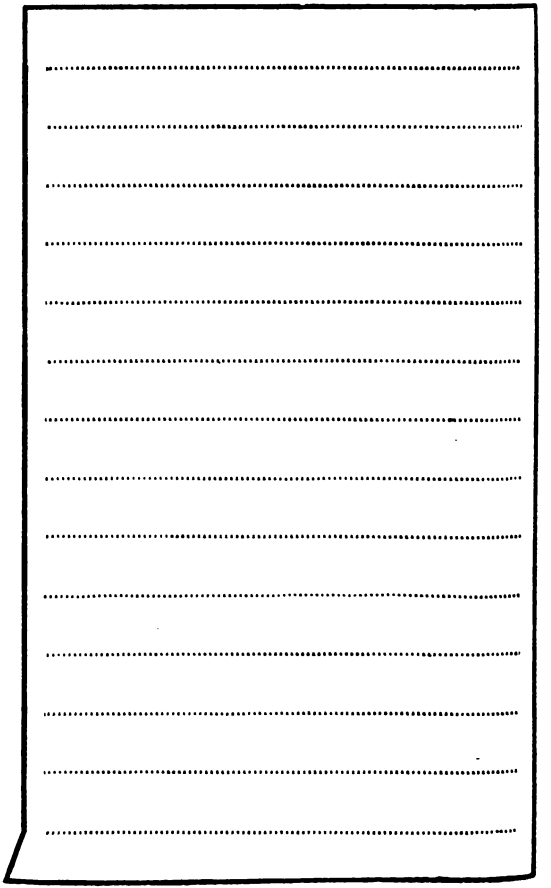
Ye are complete in Him.—COL. ii. 10.

AM I seeking in any way to add to, or build upon the finished work of Christ my Saviour? Does not the perfect satisfaction of God the Father with the sacrifice offered, and atonement made, convince me of its completeness and efficacy for my soul's salvation? Is it not daring presumption even to harbour the thought that any act or course of living, pursued by a sinful creature of His hand, could in the remotest degree aid the blood-bought results of the Saviour's sacrifice? Am I thankfully content to receive all from Him?

"God offers you the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness, that will cover all your sins and fit all your wants. You may have it without money and without price. Take God's word for it, and thankfully accept His free gift."

"Though faith and hope are often tried,
We ask not, need not, aught beside;
So safe, so calm, so satisfied,
The souls that cling to Thee."





July 10.

***Leaning upon her Beloved.*—Cant. viii. 5.**

WAS my soul come up from the arid wilderness of sin, by true repentance, leaning on Christ the Beloved? Do I realize that a soul convinced of sin and truly humbled is in a wilderness, and that there is no coming from thence but by leaning on Christ by faith: not leaning to our own understanding, nor trusting to any righteousness or strength of our own as sufficient, but going forth, and on, in the strength of the Lord alone, making mention of His righteousness?

"Lean upon Jesus for strength: He can strengthen your faith, and strengthen your hope, and strengthen your heart, for every burden, and for every trial, and for every temptation. Lean upon Him: He loves you to link your feebleness to His almightiness, to avail yourself of His grace."

"O Holy Saviour! Friend unseen!
Since on Thine arm Thou bidd'st us lean,
Help us, throughout life's changing scene,
By faith to cling to Thee!"

July 11.

***He humbled Himself.*—Phil. ii. 8.**

WHEN the Lord of life and glory humbled Himself even to the death of the cross, does it not become His followers to endeavour to imitate His example—to put away high and proud thoughts, and be gentle and kind to all? Do I prayerfully endeavour to crush under self-exalting thoughts, which must tend more or less to influence the manners? Am I willing to be made all things to all men, so that I may even in some little way glorify my heavenly Master?

"Christ the King of glory's whole life was a life of humiliation, meanness, poverty, and disgrace. He 'had not where to lay His head;' lived upon alms; was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' This was the humiliation of His life. But the lowest step of His humiliation was His dying the death of the cross."—*Matthew Henry.*

"A little while, O Lord, and we
In glory shall behold Thy face;
Teach us till then, to take with Thee
Thy place on earth—the lowest place."

July 12.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His be
Ps. ciii. 2.

DO I remember that it is the soul, that whi within me," which must be employed in thanks to the God of all mercies? Is it an to offer to God the mere thanks of the lips? If th does not accompany the movement of the lips, will th accept? Do I realize that in order to return heartfelt to God, there must be a grateful remembrance of pa cies? for if we do not give thanks for them we forg that is unjust as well as unkind.

"In turning God's benefits into occasions of sin, un ful man imitates the earth from whence he was tak that makes use of the heat of the sun to send up v that obscure the beams of light he communicates t *Bishop Hopkins.*

"Let me Thy gracious gifts receive
With gratitude and joy,
And in Thy just and ceaseless praise
Each thankful hour employ."—*A. Toplady.*

July 13.

Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord th led thee.—DEUT. viii. 2.

WHEN troubles oppress me, do I, rememberi way of the past, its many straits and diff through which the Lord has brought m thankful courage therefrom for the future, and ser more trustfully? When a new mercy meets me do I my Ebenezer? Do I follow cheerfully where my Go or do I struggle to pursue a way of my own? Do grateful that I am not left alone to find the way hom

"Many favours which God giveth us ravel out fo of hemming; for though prayer purchaseth ble giving praise doth keep the quiet possession of them

"Take up thy burden—ever forward pressing;
Fight thy way onwards, fearless, day by day,
The steady heart, the untired hand possessing,
The stars of faith and hope to light the way.
Let not the lonely soul, still earthward given,
Sigh o'er its broken reeds, its gods laid low:
Better kneel down, and pray, till breath from heaven
Shall waft its fragrance o'er the poor sad brow."

July 14.

A little while.—Heb. x. 37.

THOUGH the present conflict is sharp, do I look forward, and strengthen myself with the knowledge that at most it is but for "a little while"? Do I long to be "for ever with the Lord," as well as free from present suffering? Do I seek to do my utmost to forward my Master's glory while on earth, knowing that if I would have an everlasting rest, I must not, nor ought I to expect perfect rest while here? Do I stimulate others to make good use of their "little while"?

"The Jordan is not far off. A few breathings of the air of the wilderness, a few steps across its dreary sands, and then—we are at home."

"Heaven is a day without a cloud to shade it, or a night to darken it; it is an everlasting home with Jesus."

"Only a little longer have we to trust and wait,
Ere we reach the portals, pass the pearly gate,
Hear the shout of welcome, from dear ones gone before,
In our Father's mansion-home for evermore."

July 15.

My Lord and my God.—John xx. 28.

DO I realize that if I am faithless I am Christless and graceless, hopeless and joyless? Does not the very fact of the slowness and backwardness with which the faithful followers of our Saviour received the evidences of His Divine origin form a strong and conclusive proof of the truth of the Redeemer's mission, seeing that even they received all with due cautiousness? Do I accept Christ as my Lord and my God?

"Him whom we have learned to trust as our Saviour, and love as our Friend, and follow as our Master, in wonder and worship, with Thomas we also hail as our Lord and our God."—*Dr. Hamilton.*

"God of my salvation, hear,
And help me to believe;
Simply do I draw near,
Thy blessing to receive.
Full of guilt, alas! I am,
But to Thy wounds for refuge flee;
Friend of sinners! spotless Lamb!
Thy blood was shed for me."

July 16.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.
PROV. xviii. 24.

AM I willing to accept Christ as a Friend? Does it afford me comfort to know that Christ is the unfailing, sympathizing Friend of His people? Do I give Him the only return He asks—the full confidence of a loving, grateful heart? Why should I deny to this heavenly Friend what I would not think of withholding from an earthly friend? Am I grateful for the inestimable blessings which this Friend of friends gave His precious life to purchase for me?

"He who has found a Saviour has found something more than a moral remedy, or a good physician; he has found an all-sufficient, never-failing, and sympathizing Friend."—*Hamilton.*

"Weak though we are, He still is near,
To lead, console, defend;
In all our sorrow, sin, and fear,
Our all-sufficient Friend."

July 17.

None shall be alone in his appointed times.—ISA. xiv. 31.

WHEN through circumstances I may be outwardly alone, does the sense of His presence give me peace? Does my soul hold profitable communion with her Redeemer during the hours of solitude, whether compulsory or otherwise? Is it not comforting to know that He appoints my hours of loneliness?

"The Lord thinks upon you—He is with you—He will never leave you, nor forsake you. He is a Friend, a Brother, a Lord;—a Friend to guide you with counsel; a Brother, to sympathize with you in all your sorrow; a Lord, to defend you from all evil, and make all things work together for your good."

"Alone! believer, child of God,
It is not so—it cannot be.
Though all were cold beneath the sod
Who ever loved or thought of thee,
An ever-present, mighty One,
Is with thee—will be to the end.
Thou hast the Father and the Son;
Art thou alone with such a Friend?"

[redacted]

July 18.

Be careful for nothing.—PHIL. iv. 6.

DO I endeavour to keep my mind free from anxious and distracting thought while threading my way through the difficulties and trials of life? Do I remember that it is the duty and interest of the Christian to live without care? Do I seek to draw the distinction between the care of diligence, which is our duty, and which consists in a prudential regard for our individual circumstances, and that care which is the result of sinful distrust, and which only unfits the mind for serious thought?

"Wealth is not the way to heaven, but the contrary. Let all your care be how to live well, and you may be sure that you will never die poor."

"Go, then, earthly fame and pleasure!
Come, disaster, scorn, and pain!
In Thy service pain is pleasure,
With Thy favour loss is gain!
I have called Thee Abba, Father!
I have stayed my heart on Thee!
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me."—*H. F. Lyte.*

July 19.

Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?—ACTS ix. 6.

DO I desire to know and to follow God's will? Do I strive to make the Lord's will my pleasure? Do I seek to do good to others, no matter whether it is agreeable to me or otherwise? Do I make it a subject matter of earnest prayer that my will may become swallowed up in that of the Divine? Do I search out for opportunities of doing God's will, or am I satisfied to wait until the opportunities present themselves to me?

"My heaven is to please God, and glorify Him; to give all to Him; to be wholly devoted to His glory: that is the heaven I long for; that is my religion, and that is my happiness."—*Aden.*

"Let Jesus Christ make a bridge or stepping-stone of me, provided that His high and holy name is glorified in me."—*Rutherford.*

"Sweet in confidence of faith
To trust His firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His."

July 20.

It is I; be not afraid.—MATT. xiv. 27.

IN this assurance of our blessed Saviour, may I not see that, to those who have come to Him in faith, He cannot be a terror, but a hiding-place from the storm? May I not further learn, that no matter how the wind and the waves of trouble rage and roar, even though they may seem to overwhelm, yet in the midst Jesus is; and amid the breathings of the tempest may His calm voice of encouragement be heard—whispering words of hope to His tried ones, telling that they cannot perish when He is there? Do I look away from the clouds and darkness to my ever-present Saviour?

"Tribulation cannot separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; but the love of God will in the end separate you from tribulation, bring you out of it, and give you fulness of joy."—*Hewitson.*

"Tossed with rough winds, and faint with fear,
Above the tempest, soft and clear,
What still, small accents greet thine ear?—
'Tis I; be not afraid.'"

July 21.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.—MATT. vi. 34.

IS it my endeavour to leave to the morrow's promised strength the doing of the morrow's work, and the bearing of the morrow's burden? Since my Father has promised to provide for each day's wants and burdens as they arise, why should I trouble myself with undue anxiety, and thereby waste the strength provided for the future's conflict.

"To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision of our nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days; and our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions."

"'Leave the future'—let it rest
Simply on thy Saviour's will;
'Leave the future'—they are blest
Who, confiding, hoping still,
Trust His mercy
To preserve them safe from ill."

July 22.

ıé Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him.
Ps. cxlv. 18.

IO I realize that God is ever ready to hear and answer the prayers of His people? Do I remember that whether my prayers are offered up with sincerity God hears—is ever present? Do I use this privilege 's nearness, by lifting up my heart in prayer to Him p, whenever and wherever I need it? Is it not a g to be very grateful for, that God is always within ; of prayer, and that I am always within reach of His

prayer is lost; they are lasting and living things, ver live: they are, as it were, *indented* around the of God; and when God looks around, He sees the s of His people covered with the sweet incense of the r's intercession."—*Bickersteth.*

"Where two or three together meet,
Lo, in the midst is One
Who hears adoring hearts that beat
With life His breath began."

July 23.

I have loved the habitation of Thy house.—Ps. xxvi. 8.

IAN I truly say that I love the house of God? Do I esteem it a very precious privilege to be permitted to attend within its sacred walls, and hear His ·ead, and join with heart and soul in its holy exercises? hen the unavoidable pressure of circumstances pre- ny attendance, let me not forget, that as our God de- not impossibilities, He will accept my home services?

ı you under any other form of worship serve God ıore devotion, in the true character of worshippers, the union of heart and soul with all your fellow- ans, who attend with you God's house of prayer, :ating with one voice the same mercies and blessings, ; in the same experiences?"

"And so there shines one day in seven
Bright with the special mark of heaven,
That we with love and praise may dwell
On Him who loveth us so well."

July 24.

The greatest of these is charity.—1 Cor. xiii. 13.

DO I remember that they who cultivate the grace of charity are nearest their Saviour in character? Do I bear in mind that our Divine Master has said that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that on it hinge all the ten commandments? Do I seek to be loving and kind to all, exemplifying by my daily walk that love has a deep seat in my heart? Do I realize that if I love God I must love his creatures?

"Charity is a virtue of all times and places. It is not so much an independent grace in itself, as an energy which gives the last and best finish to every other, and resolves them all into one common principle."

"Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three,
Yet is the greatest—Charity.
Father of lights! these gifts impart
To mine and every human heart:

"Faith, that in prayer can never fail;
Hope, that o'er doubting must prevail;
And Charity, whose name above
Is God's own name—for God is Love."—*Montgomery.*

July 25.

My word shall not return unto Me void.—Isa. lv. 11.

WHEN looking back on the labours of past years, and no fruits appear to cheer the heart of the labourer in God's vineyard, is there not here a word of encouragement? Is it not comforting to realize that the word spoken in much fear and trembling cannot fall to the ground, but must work its destined mission? Do I always speak God's words with prayerful, loving earnestness?

Let the difficulties which God's vineyard labourers meet with, instead of discouraging, stimulate to greater diligence, to closer self-examination, to more fervent prayer, to more constant perusal of God's Word, feeling assured that because He has said it, it cannot return to Him void.

"Once more in the deepened shades of night
Thou must sow it by faith, and not by sight;
Though all around thee be drear and dark,
Hope sends o'er the prospect one glimmering spark.
Fear not; that faint and expiring ray
May expand in the light of eternal day."

[redacted]

July 26.

st thou by searching find out God?—Job xi. 7.

I realise that the depths of God's wisdom cannot be fathomed, nor the extremes of His power bounded; the exceeding brightness of His glory , nor the rich treasures of His goodness and mercy l? Am I satisfied to know God, but not to com- God; that by a humble, diligent, believing search, l out something of God, but cannot find Him out? 'oolish in us to muse upon vanity when we have f God to think of; to let the mill grind chaff when ich plenty of corn at hand."—*Manton.*

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

'Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

July 27.

art is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.—Jer. xvii. 9.

I acknowledge that there is a greater depth of wickedness in my heart than I am aware of? Have I not found that my heart too often puts 'ood, and good for evil; that in the presence of rished sin it whispers that it may be there is no iat He does not regard?—thereby proving its de- s, since it cheats man to his ruin. Do I feel that know my heart, nor its weakness in the hour of n?

ieinousness of any sin is not to be judged by the of the incentive or the grossness of the action. Lord says 'Thou shalt not,' and His rebellious says 'I will,' whether the contest be about an a kingdom, it is stubbornness and rebellion."—

"Lord, with this guilty heart of mine
To Thy dear cross I flee;
And to Thy grace my soul resign,
To be renewed by Thee."

July 28.

All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.—Isa. lxiv. 6

AM I willing to acknowledge that my best acts so deeply tinctured by sin as to make it imposs to give to them the name of righteousnesses? I try to regard all that God enables me to do for Hin only being my duty, and that duty but imperfectly d Do I desire to fling away all that self-righteous cover which no efforts of mine could make large enough to w my soul in, and taking the spotless robe of my Savio righteousness, which can amply cover the darkest sins approach a reconciled God?

"There is none truly purged by the blood of Christ doth not endeavour after purity of heart and conversati but yet it is the blood of Christ by which they are fair, there is no spot in them."—*Archbishop Leighton.*

"Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone."—*A Toplady.*

July 29.

Ye are the salt of the earth.—Matt. v. 13.

DO I, having been taught, and having received gospel of Christ, endeavour to teach it to oth Do I seek to enforce that teaching as much by example as by my words, remembering if I would fulfil Saviour's design of being "the salt of the earth," my should be a living example of the effects of the gosp Christ? Do I remember that the holy, regular, and ex plary life and conversation of the Christian, often does n to arrest the downward progress of the wilful sinner t direct teaching by word of mouth, which might not listened to?

"In the symbolical language of Scripture, salt is un stood to be *pure doctrine in a corrupt world.*"—*Horne.*

"I ask Thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied;
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side!
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified."—*Waring.*

July 30.

ur moderation be known unto all men.—PHIL. iv. 5.

O I seek to keep free from extremes; from undue severity, on the one hand, towards those who differ from me in essentials even; and from undue y, on the other hand, towards the faults and misdoings rs? Do I endeavour to find out a charitable con- on for the conduct and words of those who may be in my hearing? Am I slow to form a judgment, al- aiting until I have had time dispassionately to judge ully of the many merits and demerits of the case? deration is the silken string running through the ain of all virtues."—*Bishop Hall.*

"Never hasting, never resting,
With a firm and joyous heart,
Ever onward slowly tending,
Acting aye a brave man's part.
Undepressed by seeming failure,
Unelated by success;
Heights attained revealing higher,
Onward, upward, ever press."

July 31.

essing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.—PROV. x. 22.

O I seek for the blessing of the Lord on all my undertakings? Do I make it a point of never doing anything on which I dare not ask God's ? If God has given me wealth, do I take it, and use ift from His hand—a talent to be improved for His nd for the proper use or abuse of which He will re- n account hereafter? Do I make it a subject of thought, seeking how it can be increased; or do I hat I have thankfully, taking comfort from it, as Iod's good gifts, and doing good with it?

at a privilege this, to enjoy God in all things while them, and all things in God when they are taken

"I often love to dwell
On all the way I've trod;
To trace the chain of life along,
And find each link in God."

August 1.

Power belongeth unto God.—Ps. lxii. 11.

DO I gladly ascribe power to God, knowing that He is almighty, can do everything, and that with Him nothing is impossible? Since power belongs unto God, is it not a sufficient reason why I should trust in Him at all times, live in constant dependence upon Him, and ask for that power to help me through all my difficulties, knowing that He is willing as well as able to do all things? Am I willing to submit myself to His power?

"Let us heartily rejoice in the *Strength* of our salvation. Let us go on boldly in the way of His laws. Let us seek safety under the shadow of His wing. And let us put our cause into the hand of that great Advocate, who is able to save to the uttermost."

"My dear Almighty Lord,
My Conqueror and my King,
Thy sceptre and Thy sword,
Thy reigning grace I sing:
Thine is the power; behold, I sit
In willing bonds before Thy feet."

August 2.

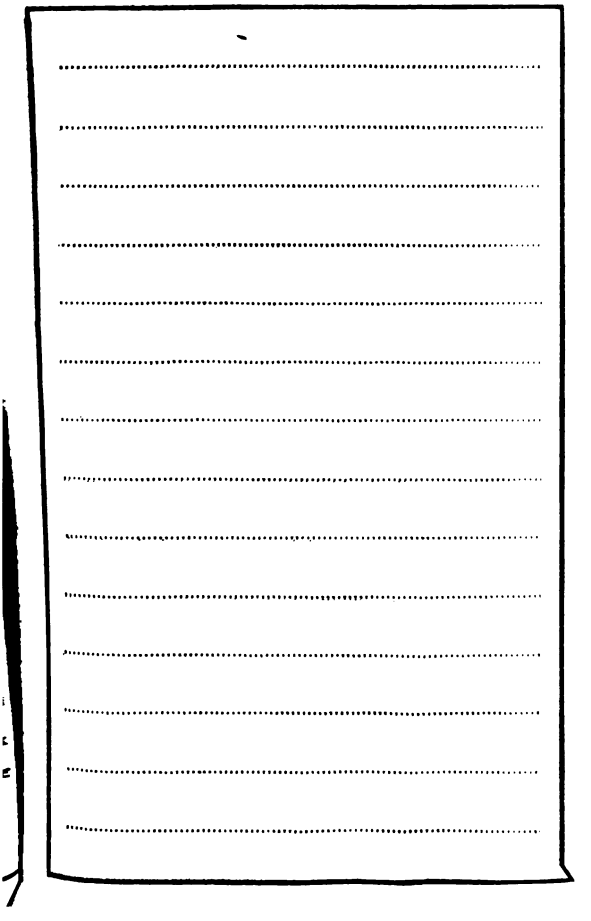
He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.
LUKE xi. 13.

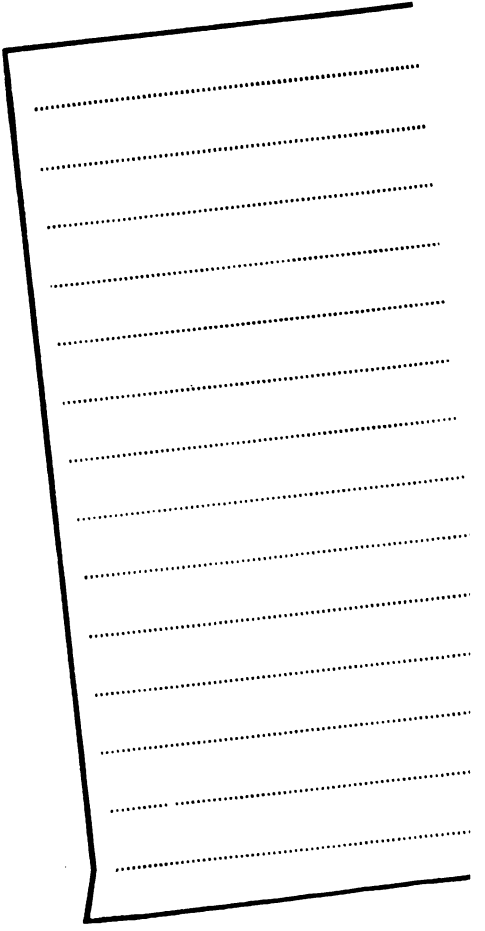
IF the Holy Spirit of God has not come into my heart, whose fault is it? Have I prayed earnestly and unceasingly for this great gift of the Holy Spirit? Do I doubt God's ability or willingness to fulfil His promise? Do I remember that I can never come to God on a more pleasing errand than when I come to Him asking for His Spirit to enable me to do that which is pleasing to Him; seeking to do good to others with the same good that I have been a privileged partaker of?

"Those who do not frequent God's throne of *mercy* on earth will never bow at His throne of *glory* in heaven."

"In God's Word not a single blessing is promised, either in this world or the next, to those who do not pray."

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."





August 8.

***Unite my heart to fear Thy name.*—Ps. lxxxvi. 11.**

IS my spirit upright—sincere in religion? Do I find that my soul is apt to wander, sit loose to the things of eternity and close to the things of time? Do I not often find my heart wandering back to the world, seeking to reconcile its service with the service of God? Do I feel my need of the grace of God to unite my heart to Him, that I may serve Him with all my powers, feeling that they are all too little to chant His great name?

"My God, how often have I, in conversing with Thee, been like one asleep and unconscious of what he says! Mercifully forgive me for this, and associate henceforth Thy Spirit with my spirit, that my prayer may be as devout as Thy majesty and my own necessities require."—*Gotthold.*

"O Lord, Thy heavenly grace impart,
And fix my frail, inconstant heart.
Henceforth my chief desire shall be
To dedicate myself to Thee—
To Thee, my God, to Thee, to Thee!"

August 4.

***Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee.*—John xxi. 17.**

CAN I appeal to my Saviour, He who knows all things, as to the sincerity of my love for Him? Is it a comfort to me to know that my witness is in heaven, my record on high? Do I look to my Saviour's love for me, or to my love to my Saviour, for acceptance? Has the sense of my Saviour's incomparable love bowed my hard heart, and compelled me to love Him? Has He the first place in my heart?

"O Lord, I am Thine. Thou hast bought me with Thy blood; Thou hast won me by Thy grace; Thou hast called me by Thy constraining voice; Thou hast subdued me by Thy conquering Spirit: I am Thine. My soul is Thine, to adore Thee; my heart is Thine, to love Thee; my body is Thine, to serve Thee; my tongue is Thine, to praise Thee."

"In word, in deed, in thought,
I do not, cannot, love Thee as I ought:
Thy love must give me that power, Thy love alone."—*Montgomery.*

August 5.

***We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*—Acts xiv. 22.**

AM I satisfied that if I would wear the crown I must bear the cross—must through much tribulation gain the heavenly land? Does not this beforehand-knowledge, instead of enervating, nerve the Christian soldier for his upward conflict? Does not the fact of suffering being the badge of sonship reconcile to the sufferer much that might otherwise be impossible to bear? Do I remember that although it is imperative that God's children descend to the vale of trouble, yet that they shall ascend from it triumphantly to the unclouded glories of heaven?

"We are not to expect the joys of heaven while on earth; let us be content that there is a highway for us to walk in, and a Leader to conduct us in that way."—*Cecil.*

"Haste thee on from grace to glory,
Armed by faith, and winged by prayer:
Heaven's eternal day's before thee—
God's own hand shall guide thee there."

August 6.

***Go forward!*—Ex. xiv. 15.**

DO I realize that I cannot press forward on my heavenward journey unless I have first a sense of God's pardoning grace and reconciliation with me? When difficulties meet me on my onward path, is it not my duty still to go forward, strong in my Father's promised help and guidance? Do I endeavour to mind my present work only, and leave the future and its issues with God, to whom they alone belong? Do I endeavour to urge the laggard steps of others forward?

"Be always displeased with what thou art, if thou desire to attain to what thou art not; for where thou hast pleased thyself there thou abidest. But if thou sayest, 'I have enough,' thou perishest. Always add, always walk, always proceed: neither stand still, nor go back, nor deviate."—*Augustine.*

"Press boldly on, and thou shalt prove
The triumphs of Immanuel's love:
He bore the darkest hour for thee—
Stand by the cross of Calvary till the day dawn."

August 7.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.
ECCLES. ix. 10.

DO I feel that while life is spared there is something to be done, and which must be done, if I would please God; and that the great end to be sought after is how to do good? Do I realize that *this* is a world of service, *that* a world of recompense; *this* but the probation and preparation for eternity? Do I take advantage of the opportunities for doing good to myself and others which are now given to me through the mercy of God? Do I sanctify all my employments by doing them "as unto Christ"?

"If sorrow could enter heaven—if a sigh could be heaved there—if a tear could roll down the cheek of a saint in light, it would be for the time spent in forgetfulness of God, which might have been spent to His glory."

"Let us do the work before us,
Cheerily, bravely, while we may,
Ere the long night silence cometh,
And with us it is not day."

August 8.

Men see not the bright light which is in the clouds.
JOB xxxvii. 21.

AM I *looking* in faith for the bright light which is behind the thick clouds of darkness? Do I believe that though my Father does not always see fit to smile, yet that His frown is but the veiling of His mercy, sent to make me search more earnestly for Him, and, having found Him, to cling more trustfully to Him? Am I content to trust where I cannot trace? Do I wait with submission for that future revelation which is promised when faith is no longer needed?

"Faith can support when nature shrinks—faith can call God Father even when He frowns, and make some discovery of a sun through the darkest cloud."—*Arrowsmith.*

"No cloud can overshadow the true Christian but his faith will discover a rainbow in it."—*Bishop Hopkins*

"Clouds are not substance—wherefore should we fear
When gloom oppresses us?—A pure, bright light
Gleams out beyond, to those who walk aright."

August 9.

Come; for all things are now ready.—LUKE xiv. 17.

HAVE I accepted this gracious and unreserved invitation? Why should I hesitate, why should the invited sinner refuse, or delay to accept this full and free pardon? Am I ready and willing to be saved? Am I hankering after the world and its pleasures? Is there not a fear that, through carelessness, the day of salvation may pass from me? Am I ready for the "all things" prepared?

"The Father is ready to accept us, the Son to intercede for us, the Spirit to sanctify us, the promises ready as wells of water for supply. Is all this ready, and shall we be unready? Is all this preparation made for us, and shall we be unthankful?"—*Henry.*

"But fainter than the pole star's ray
Before the noon-tide blaze of day
Is all of love that man can know—
All that in angels' breasts can glow—
Compared, O Lord of Hosts, with thine,
Unwearied! fathomless! divine!"

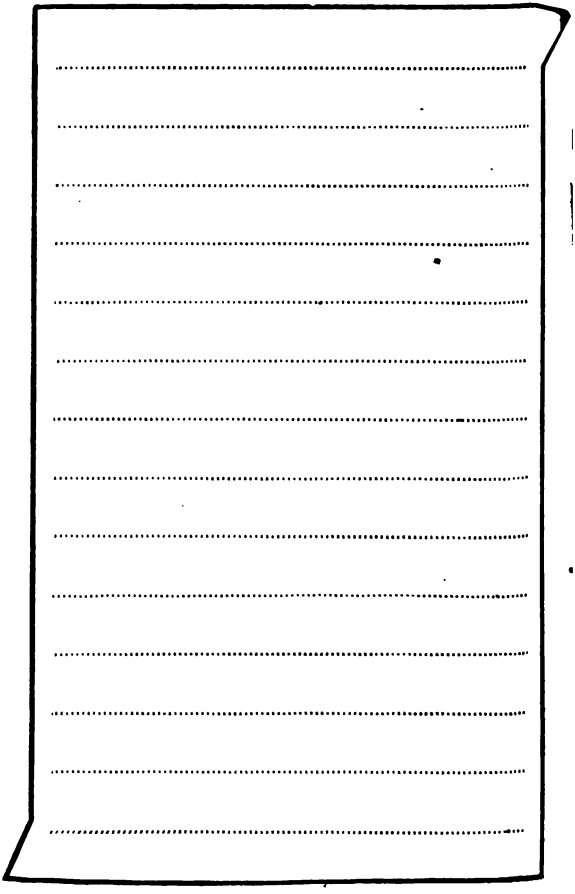
August 10.

She hath done what she could.—MARK xiv. 8.

DO I so order my life that the Saviour's words may be applied to me? Is it my earnest desire to do what I can in the Lord's own way? Am I anxious to please Him in the right performance of the small duties that fall to my daily lot? Am I seeking for some great thing to do, thereby neglecting the matters, insignificant though they may seem to me to be, which He has appointed to be done in my walk through life?

"Your circumstances and position in life may forbid you to point to any splendid services in the cause of God. It matters not. The quiet, lowly walk—patience and submission—putting yourself unreservedly in His hands—the unselfish spirit—the unostentatious kindness,—He values as much as the most laborious efforts."

"The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask—
Room to deny ourselves—a road
That daily brings us nearer God."—*Keble.*



August 11.

One thing is needful.—LUKE x. 42.

DO I seek after that real godliness which is the one thing needful, which alone can profit for this life, and which alone can go with me into life everlasting? Do I realize that there must be oneness of heart on the subject of religion; that God must be all in all, or nothing at all? Do I feel the need of something more than earthly pursuits or pleasures to fill to satisfaction the cravings of the immortal soul? Can I say with truth that I have chosen the better part?

"When the heart is full of God, a little of the world will go a great way with us."—*Rutherford.*

"Earthly occupations may *engaje*, but must not *engross* our thoughts; they must have a share in our hearts, but let us not forget that our well-being through eternity demands that it should be a subordinate share only."—*Haggit.*

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasure while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die."

August 12.

All things are of God.—2 COR. v. 18.

AM I in the constant habit of tracing all that happens to me to God? Do I seek to realize His hand in all my joys and troubles? Is it not but an act of gratitude to the Author and Giver of so much good, that His supreme agency should be recognized and acknowledged? Does it not make trouble easier to bear, when we remember that it is one of the "all things" which "are of God"?

"I have nothing but what Thou hast given me; I can do nothing but as Thou enablest me; I can succeed in nothing but as Thou prosperest me. Let God in all things be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise for ever and ever."

"Though to-day may not fulfil
All thy hopes, have patience still;
For perchance to-morrow's sun
Sees the happier days begun:
As God willeth march the hours,
Bringing joy at last in showers,
When whate'er we asked is ours."—*Lyra Germanica.*

August 13.

What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?—Ps. viii. 4.

WHEN I reflect on the self-existent glory and power of the Deity, does not the thought of His goodness and condescension to sinful man, the rebel creation of His breath, strike me with wonder and adoring love? Was it necessary to His eternal majesty that He should pluck from His bosom His only Son, and send Him to suffer and die for sinners? Who could dare question did the same breath that created annihilate, when sinners persisted in wilful sin? Must I not, therefore, laying my hand on my mouth, seek by a holy life to show my gratitude for love so unexampled?

"We write our mercies in the dust, but our afflictions we engrave in marble; our memories serve us too well to remember the latter, but are strangely forgetful of the former."—*Bishop Hall.*

"Now to the power of God supreme
Be everlasting honours given!
He saves from hell (we bless His name),
He calls our wandering feet to heaven."

August 14.

A word spoken in due season, how good is it!—Prov. xv. 23.

DO I make it a subject of earnest prayer, that God may give me grace to enable me to speak the "word in due season"? Do I realise that there are times when the word spoken would not be in due season, and might harden the heart of the listener, instead of softening it; that many good and well-intentioned words fall short of their intended purpose because they have not been well timed? At the same time, am I careful to watch for, and allow no opportunity of speaking "a word" to pass unheeded by?

"My desire is, that God would do His own will, and glorify His own name, by my life or death: which is the best disposal of me that God Himself can make."—*Rutherford.*

"Speak wisely; who can tell
The power of a word?
A sinner it may save from hell,
And turn him to the Lord."

August 15.

Himself took our infirmities.—MATT. viii. 17.

IS it not an unspeakable comfort to know that our gracious Saviour and all-powerful Intercessor once knew our troubles and sufferings—that He was hungry, and thirsty, and weary, and heavy-laden; troubled in spirit, and "very sorrowful"? When troubles oppress me, do I realize that my Saviour in heaven differs not from the Man of Sorrows who suffered on earth, and that if He bears not our sufferings with us, making them to sit light, it is our own fault, for we will not come to Him that we might have rest?

"However the Saviour may surround Himself with dense clouds, and hide from His children the pleasant light of His countenance, still the love of His heart never expires, never diminishes."—*Rev. A. Bruce.*

"Touched with a sympathy Divine,
He knows our feeble frame:
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For He has felt the same."

August 16.

Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.
Ps. xvii. 5.

ALTHOUGH by the grace of God I have been rescued from the paths of the destroyer, yet do I pray for sustaining grace, that I may be kept in the ways of godliness, and animated to follow that only which is good? Do I pray that, as the Lord hath kept me hitherto, so He will still keep me, prevent me trusting to my own strength and guidance, and enable me to rest on Himself alone?

"Those that are, through grace, going in God's paths, have need to pray, and do pray, that their goings may be held up in those paths; for we stand no longer than He is pleased to hold us, we go no further than He is pleased to lead us, bear us up, and carry us."—*Henry.*

"Go with me whither I would go,
Stay with me where I stay;
Do for me what I ought to do,
Speak Thou what I should say."

August 17.

The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.
Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

DO I take the comfort of this assurance, that whatever good work God has begun in me, He can and will carry it on? Is there any latent feeling on my part that I might be able to perfect that work myself? Am I satisfied that God knows what is best for me both here and hereafter? Is it my chief concern to fulfil my duty towards God, and to find my happiness in Him? Do I thankfully acknowledge that whatever of good there may be in me, it is of God, and that He alone can sustain it?

"What can we wish for in a heritage that is not found in God? Would we have large possessions? He is immensity. Would we have a term of long continuance? He is eternity itself."—*Arrowsmith.*

"He perfects what His hand begins,
And stone on stone He lays,
Till firm and fair the building rise,
A temple to His praise."

August 18.

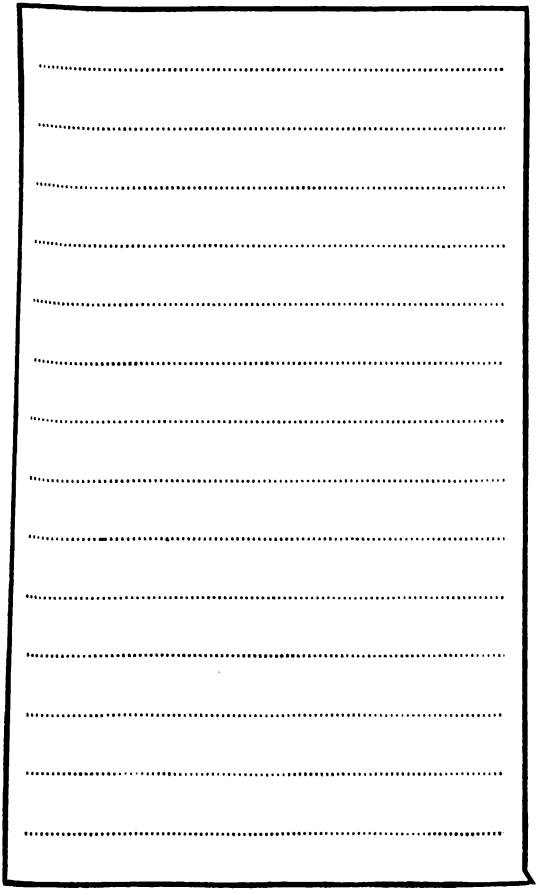
They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.—Matt. ix. 12.

DO I feel and acknowledge myself to be one of the sick ones, needing the great Physician's care? Am I willing to be healed by Him, and to submit to whatever treatment He thinks best to make use of? Am I looking to any other for spiritual healing, or do I think to find the remedy within myself? Do I try to look away from the darkness of self, and its inability to give comfort, to Jesus, the great and good Physician?

"God hath promised pardon to him that repenteth; but He hath not promised repentance to him that sinneth."—*Quarles.*

"The greatest sinner who trusts only in Christ's blood will assuredly be saved. The best man in the world who trusts in his own goodness will be lost."—*Hewitson.*

"I need Thee, precious Jesus, for I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty, my heart is dead within:
I need the cleansing fountain where I can always flee:
The blood of Christ most precious—the sinner's perfect plea.



August 19.

I will be to them as a little sanctuary.—EZEK. xi. 16.

HAVE I found that God has been my sanctuary in the time of need? Does not this gracious promise also tell me that should circumstances, not of my ng out, ever deprive me of the privilege of attending s public ministrations, the Saviour will be present with n the chamber of watching, on the bed of sickness, in ath of duty, no matter where or what that may be; hat with the riches of His grace He will supply all that nting? Do I go to that sanctuary when in trouble?

Keep God thy Friend in prosperity, and thou mayest confidence resort to Him and rely upon Him in adty."—*Sir M. Hale.*

Christ's sweet presence cateth out the bitterness of w."—*Rutherford.*

> "This God is the God we adore,
> Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
> Whose love is as great as His power,
> And knows neither measure nor end."—*Hart.*

August 20.

Grieve not the holy Spirit of God.—EPH. iv. 30.

DO I earnestly strive to avoid those sins, evil passions, and discordant thoughts, which must necessarily grieve God's holy Spirit? Do I listen to the whisgs of the Spirit, when sin clamours to be heard, and obey; or do I turn a deaf ear, and sin on, as if no note arning had fallen on conscience? Do I realize the posity of the Spirit becoming wearied, and withdrawing holy presence? Do I mourn over my frequent depars from the path of rectitude, and avoid temptation?

That sorrow for sin which is the effect of heated passions , will surely die away; and that which proceeds from orse of conscience is seldom lasting; but the contrition h is lodged in the soul by the Spirit of God nothing can roy, no length of time efface, no sense of pardon weaken." *adley.*

> "Oh, never let my Lord depart;
> Lie down and rest upon my heart:
> I charge my sins not once to move,
> Nor stir, nor wake, nor grieve my Love."

August 21.

The Lord is at hand.—PHIL. iv. 5.

CAN I look forward with calmness to the secon coming of my Lord? Am I prepared to meet Hi coming with a welcome? If the thought be on of pain to me, does it not behove me to search out what th besetting sin is which shrinks from the Lord's person scrutiny, since the same shrinking must apply also to th approach of death?

"It is the suddenness and uncertainty of the coming c Christ to all mankind, for either judgment or death, tha extends the charge of watchfulness to all men, and that call upon us aloud to keep our souls ever awake; for if we ar unprepared to meet the Lord at death, we can never b ready when He comes to judgment."—*Watts.*

"Time's sun is fast setting, its twilight is nigh—
Its evening is falling in cloud o'er the sky;
Its shadows are stretching in ominous gloom;
Its midnight approaches—the midnight of doom:
Then haste, sinner, haste; there is mercy for thee,
And wrath is preparing—flee, lingerer, flee!"

August 22.

Use this world as not abusing it.—1 COR. vii. 31.

DO I remember that in not using the world as (means it to be, to His honour and glory, I al it, make a bad use of it, for which God will me into judgment? Is it not abusing the world, whi one of God's gifts, when, instead of being a servant, made a master, an idol, having that room in my affec which only should be kept for God? Is it not abusin world, when I allow my heart to become set on it?

"A Christian should be like the works of a watch, do not get in disorder, or its wheels cease going, ho much it may be carried up and down."

"True rest consists not in the oft revying
Of worldly dross;
Earth's miry purchase is not worth the buying—
Her gain is loss;
Her rest but giddy toil, if not relying
Upon her Cross.
How worldlings droll for trouble! that fond heart
That is possest
Of earth without a cross, has earth without a rest."—

August 23.

They follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life.
JOHN x. 27, 28.

DO I follow Christ, like Him taking up my daily cross, and bearing it patiently and unmurmuringly? Am I willing to accept this free gift, which is made without reference to any intentions or doings of mine? Do I follow my Saviour fully and with a ready heart, halting not at any difficulties that may lie in the way, but trusting to the power of my Divine Guide to make the way straight before me? Am I content to wait for the rest, until the fight is fought?

"Make God the first and last of all thy actions; so begin that thou mayest have Him in the end; otherwise I doubt whether it had not been better that thou hadst never begun."

"O Father, if a moment's space I pause before the starting,
As one who lingers for a while, though past the final parting,
It is that I with truthful heart, with words nor false nor hollow,
May answer to the living call with this,—
'Behold, I follow!'"

August 24.

Labour....for that meat which endureth.—JOHN vi. 27.

DO I labour as earnestly to obtain food for my undying soul, as I labour for the nourishing of my perishing body? Do I "hunger and thirst after righteousness"? Do I realize that the "meat which endureth" is everlasting happiness in heaven?—and to what thing or pursuit of earth can that be compared?

"The hero toils for fame, the scholar labours and pines that his name may live on the tablets of immortality; how much nobler thy aim, O thou man of God!—thou art living for eternity! toiling for an immortal crown! Angels and men are witnesses how thou workest for thy God. Arise, gird thyself for the contest!"

"Look to Jesus, till reviving
Faith and love thy life-springs swell;
Strength for all things good deriving
From Him who did all things well.
Work, as He did, in thy season,
Works which shall not fade away—
Work while it is called to-day."—*Frangen.*

August 27.

Let thy garments be always white.—Eccles. ix. 8.

DO I pass through the world fulfilling the part which God has appointed as mine; not going out of it to avoid temptations, but, as a good soldier of the ›ss, meeting them bravely, and conquering in Christ's ›ength? Do I so order my steps, that those around can › that though *in* the world, yet I am not *of* the world? ıve I washed my sin-stained soul white in the blood of the mb, by prayer and watchfulness keeping at arm's length › pollutions of the world?

'Alas! thou righteous God, how abominable and defiled Thy most holy sight are my garments and walk! No ubt, from day to day I brush the dust away; but, ah me! w little good it does! Forgive me, O my Father, and anse me, granting me so to walk that I may at last enter re and unsullied into Thy city."—*Gotthold.*

"Teach me to live!—Thy purpose to fulfil;
Bright for Thy glory let my taper shine.
Each day renew, remould this stubborn will;
Closer round Thee my heart's affections twine."

August 28.

Be not hasty in thy spirit.—Eccles. vii. 9.

DO I endeavour to govern my temper with wisdom and grace, seeking by earnest prayer to repress the first risings of passion in my heart? When der provocation, do I endeavour to behave myself meekly, king care that my words shall not wound; or, if necessary, be silent? When tempted to give way to temper, do I nember Jesus, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again not even when falsely and malignantly accused? Am I lly sensible of the great sin of yielding to a hasty temper? "I will suffer a thousand wrongs rather than offer one; I ll suffer a hundred rather than return one. I have ever ınd that to strive with my superior is fatuous; with my ual, doubtful; with my inferior, sordid and base; with y, full of unquietness."—*Bishop Hall.*

"Speak gently! it is better far
To rule by love than fear;
Speak gently! let no harsh words mar
The good we might do here."—*Langford.*

August 29.

Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken.—JER. xiii. 15.

DO I listen to God's voice, as heard in His sacred Word, with the humility of a learner desiring to be taught; not with a cavilling, captious spirit, seeking out something to find fault with? Before coming to God's Word, do I seek to disabuse my mind of all preconceived notions? When pride rises within, does not the remembrance of the Lord of life and glory wandering on this earth as a servant, enduring the contradiction of sinners, lay my self-exalting feelings in the dust?

"God delighteth in the soul that is humble and contrite, and trembleth at His word; but there would be little of this in us if we had here our full desires."

"The saint that wears heaven's highest crown,
In deepest adoration bends;
The weight of glory bends him down
The most when high his soul ascends.
Nearest the throne itself must be
The footstool of humility."

August 30.

God shall bring every work into judgment.—ECCLES. xii. 14.

AM I so living a life of godliness and closeness of walk with God, that when my day of reckoning comes I may be able to render up my account with joy and an approving conscience? Have I cast all my sins on Jesus, beseeching of Him to pardon them; thus looking on Him as my Saviour as well as my Judge? Am I careful about small sins—which are not small in God's sight, though wrongly I may regard them as such—remembering that even for each idle, useless word, I must hereafter give account?

"Man would have cleared the Pharisee and condemned the publican, when they both appeared in the temple together—the one, as it were, in the choir, the other in the belfry; but Christ's judgment is, that the publican departed justified."

"Time *was*, is past; thou canst not it recall.
Time *is*, thou hast; employ the portion small.
Time *future* is not, and may never be;
Time *present* is the only time for thee."

August 31.

bitterness and evil speaking be put away.—Eph. iv. 31.

O I ever indulge in speaking evil of others? Do I listen with eagerness when others are evil spoken of, and, if I do not join, by my silent acquiescence untenance to it? Can I say that in thought as well l my conscience is free from the odium of judging ? Has charity taken up her dwelling-place in my

: men to pretend to follow the example of Christ, the meantime be proud, wrathful, envious, bitterly , calling for fire from heaven to destroy men, or g it themselves from hell, is to cry, 'Hail unto Him!' crucify Him afresh unto their power."—*Owen.*

"What grace, O Lord, and beauty shone
Around Thy steps below!
What patient love was seen in all
Thy life and death of woe!
Oh, give us hearts to love like Thee—
Like Thee, O Lord, to grieve
Far more for others' sins than all
The wrongs that we receive."

September 1.

hath despised the day of small things?—Zech. iv. 10.

M I careful to encourage, not to repress, the strugglings after good which may come under my notice in those around me, seeing that the great God ot despise the day of small things in the souls of His es? Does this encourage me to persevere in my for God?

all the history of our Saviour there is not one wrathtence, not one speech of condemnation. He had hy and compassion for all infirmities; for sorrow, ness—even for repentant sin. He went about heall pardoning."

"Sow when the morning breaketh
In beauty o'er the land,
And when the evening falleth
Withhold not thou thy hand.
Sow though the rock repel thee,
In its cold and sterile pride;
Some cleft there may be riven,
Where the little seed may hide."

September 2.

Let your light so shine before men, that they n
good works, and glorify your Father which
—MATT. v. 16.

DO I make the glory of God the great end
at in my religion? Do I seek not on
God myself, but to lead others to d
Do I remember that the proof of God's grace
heart is its effect on my life, and that others m
its exhibition, who might not otherwise be ir
religion? Do I remember that example ever te

"We glorify God, both by conforming our
His character and pleasure, and by exhibiting t
ity to the view of our fellow-men."—*Dwight.*

"If you have not gold and silver
Ever ready at command;
If you cannot towards the needy
Reach an ever-open hand;
You can visit the afflicted,
O'er the erring you can weep;
You can be a true disciple,
Sitting at the Saviour's feet."

September 8.

If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy streng
PROV. xxiv. 10.

CAN I feel my Father's sustaining power
clouds of adversity as in the full sunsh
and joy? If that comfort is not pr
when most I need it, is not the fault with my
from want of faith and trust in God? Do I
dwelling on a coming trouble weakens the str
is most necessary to grapple with it?

"Nothing does so establish and strengthe
amidst the rollings and turbulence of presen
doth a look above them, to the steady and go
which they are ruled; and beyond them, to th
beautiful end to which by that Hand they will l
—*Jeremy Taylor.*

"Commit thy way to God,
The weight that makes thee faint;
Worlds are to Him no load,
To Him breathe thy complaint."—*P*

September 4.

I commune with mine own heart.—Ps. lxxvii. 6.

DO I watch carefully against the evil in my heart, lest it should get the dominion over me? Do I judge myself with the same severity of judgment which I accord to others? Do I bring all my actions to the impartial test of God's Word? Do I feel more and more my need of a new heart, and a new spirit? Do I make it a subject of earnest prayer?

"External acts of religion—to lift up the eye to heaven, to bow the knee, to read a prayer—are easy; but to examine a man's self—to turn in upon his own soul, to take the heart, as a watch, all in pieces, and see what is defective—this is not easy. But let us remember that if we will not try ourselves, God will try us."

"Lord, I am come alone with Thee!
Thy voice to hear, Thy face to see,
And feel Thy presence near:
It is not fancy's lovely dream,
Though wondrous e'en to faith it seem,
That thou dost wait me here."—*C. Wilkins.*

September 5.

Wash, and be clean.—2 Kings v. 13.

AM I content to do anything, to submit to anything, to part with anything, so that my guilty soul may be purified? Am I willing to take Christ on His own terms? Do I fully comprehend the simplicity of the cure, "Wash, and be clean," requiring no *previous* cleansing—"Just as I am"? Have I gone with willingness and gratitude to the ever-flowing fountain of the Saviour's blood?

"The gospel promises man heaven, and he is delighted with the promise; but with it is coupled the injunction, 'Wash, and be clean:' this is so contrary to the likings of man's corrupt nature, that though the gospel offers this full salvation, with ample means for being cleansed, yet how often he goes his way, and returns to hear no more!"

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Vile, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"—*Toplady.*

September 6.

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.—Ps. xxiii. 4.

CAN I look away from the physical accompaniments of death to the glories beyond, and to the powerful and ever-present Shepherd of the sheep, who bears up in His arms of love the bewildered soul as it passes through the death valley? Do I make a prayerful effort in the time of trouble to lean on that staff which never yet, like the reeds of earth, pierced the hand that leaned on it for comfort and support?

"This is as though the discipline of your heavenly Father had *cut below the graft* of self-love and earthly-mindedness, and you could look up and bless Him for removing *all* that hindered you from yielding to His all-wise appointment."

"And if His hand in mercy bent
Those reeds, on which I might have leant,
And plucked my life-flowers, 'twas to show
I must not place my love below;
While with each cross a hope was given,
Which stronger, brighter, beamed for heaven."

September 7.

Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.—1 Sam. vii. 12.

WHEN I have prayed very earnestly for some blessing, which God has in mercy granted, am I as specially earnest to return my acknowledgments of gratitude, to give unto Him the sacrifice of praise? Am I on the watch to raise my Ebenezers? Do I from the past take fresh courage for the future?

"Real faith is as satisfied, and rests as firmly in the abiding promises of Jehovah, as if it had all the blessings of grace and glory in hand."—*Toplady.*

"Come, rouse thee, faint one, 'tis not well
To let the spirit brood
Thus darkly o'er the cares that swell
Life's current to a flood.
As brooks and torrents, rivers, all
Increase the gulf in which they fall,
Such thoughts, by gathering up the rills
Of lesser griefs, spread real ills;
And with their gloomy shades conceal
The landmarks Hope would else reveal."—*Dinnie.*

September 8.

ave not passed this way heretofore.—JOSHUA iii. 4.

O I realize that while on earth I must be prepared for many things which may not be agreeable; that I must pass ways totally unknown to me, he rest that remains is gained? Have I that assur- God's favour and support which will smooth the t path, and give light to the darkest road? Do I nfort from the fact that though the path is untrod- me, yet that my Saviour trod it when on earth?

are like little children strayed from home; and God fetching us home: but we are ready to turn into se, stay and play with everything in our way, and n on every green bank, and much ado there is to ome."—*Baxter.*

"With a childlike trust I give my hand
To the mighty Friend at my side;
And the only thing that to Him I say,
As He takes it, is, 'Hold me fast;
Suffer me not to lose my way,
And bring me home at last.'"

September 9.

ived in all good conscience before God until this day.
ACTS xxiii. 1.

AN I feel conscientiously that though others may reproach me without cause, yet that my heart condemns me not, and that I can raise my face to hout spot? Do I see God before me, live as in it, under His eyes, and with an eye to Him? Do I nscience of all that I say and do, endeavouring to my daily life according to the standard of God's rd?

nder conscience is like the apple of a man's eye,— t dust that gathers into it affects it. There is no id better way to observe whether our consciences l and stupid, than to watch what impression small ke upon them; a tender conscience will no more small sins than of great sins."—*Bishop Hopkins.*

"A tender conscience give me, Lord,
And put Thy fear within,
That I may tremble at Thy word,
And 'scape the snares of sin."

September 10.

Ye know not what ye ask.—MATT. XX. 22.

DO I realize that they "know not what they ask for," who ask for the end but overlook the means, and so sever what God has joined together? Do I acknowledge that I know not what I ask, when I ask for the glory of wearing the crown, and ask not for grace to bear the cross on the way that leads to it? Do I make it a matter of prayer to be enabled to see that when prayer is not answered, it is because our Father knows best?

"Earthen vessels are not to dispute with their former; pieces of sinning clay may, by reasoning and contending with the potter, mar the work of Him who hath His fire in Zion and His furnace in Jerusalem. There is no mist over His eyes who is wonderful in counsel."

"Daily there surges upwards to the throne
The burning wave of passionate appeal;
Ye bring your bleeding hearts, your brains that reel,
And gasp your prayers in eager, feverish tone:
The kind Controller looks with pitying eyes
On the wild upturned faces—and denies!"

September 11.

That I may know Him.—PHIL. iii. 10.

HAVE I the apostle's desire to know the Saviour, to believe in Him, to have an experimental knowledge of the power of His resurrection and fellowship of His sufferings? Am I daily becoming more and more dead to sin? Do I long after a life of holiness and conformity to God? Do I know the Saviour as a Friend, powerful and loving — as a sympathizing High Priest, touched with a feeling of our many infirmities?

"Christ is all-sufficient: get Him for your portion, and you have all; then you have infinite wisdom to direct you, infinite knowledge to teach you, infinite mercy to pity and save you, infinite love to care for and comfort you, and infinite power to protect and keep you."—*Mason.*

"Gladly the toys of earth we leave—
Wealth, pleasure, fame—for Thee alone;
To Thee our will, soul, flesh, we give;
O take, O seal them for Thine own!
Thou art the God! Thou art the Lord!
Be Thou by all Thy works adored!"—*Montague.*

September 12.

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.—Ps. i. 3.

AM I daily growing in the knowledge and love of God? Is my tendency, like that of the tree, ever upwards? Am I daily taking fresh supplies from the ever-springing fountain of God's mercy? Am I seeking to make diligent use of the season now afforded me to bring forth much fruit to the honour and glory of God? Do I improve every opportunity of doing good?

"Even the *leaf* of those who bring forth only the leaves of profession, without any good fruit, will wither, and they shall be as much ashamed of their profession as ever they were proud of it; but if the word of God rule in the heart, that will keep the profession green both to our comfort and to our credit: the laurels thus won shall never wither."—*Henry.*

"See the trees Thine hand has planted,
Watch them with a constant care;
Oh, let our request be granted,
Make them fruitful, make them fair."

September 13.

Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.—Acts xxvi. 28.

AM I one of the almost persuaded ones, who, under strong convictions of sin, are aware of the far greater excellency of the ways of God, yet allow some untoward circumstance or pleasure to overrule those convictions? Or am I one of the altogether persuaded ones, who, having been convinced of sin, have forsaken its evil paths, come out boldly from the ranks of sin, and ranged themselves on God's side?

"Let none stand still, coming near, as it were, and then stopping. Sad will it be hereafter for those of whom the best that can be said will be, that once they seemed to be not very far from the kingdom of God. Be encouraged, but be not satisfied. Lay hold on Christ by faith. Seek a saving interest in Him. Never rest till you are His—His now, His for ever."

"Our God in pity lingers still;
And wilt thou thus His love requite?
Renounce, at length, thy stubborn will;—
Thou wouldst be saved—why not to-night?"

Septem...

...n the Lord that doth sanctify you.—Ex. xxxi. ...

O I seek for sanctification as well as justification, for daily loosening to the things of time, and earnest living to God? Am I willing to be one o ord's sanctified ones, to be His child, and not Satan's ? Have I a real, heartfelt knowledge of my own sin ss, and daily need of sanctification? Is it my earnest e that my life should be such as becomes one of th d's sanctified ones?

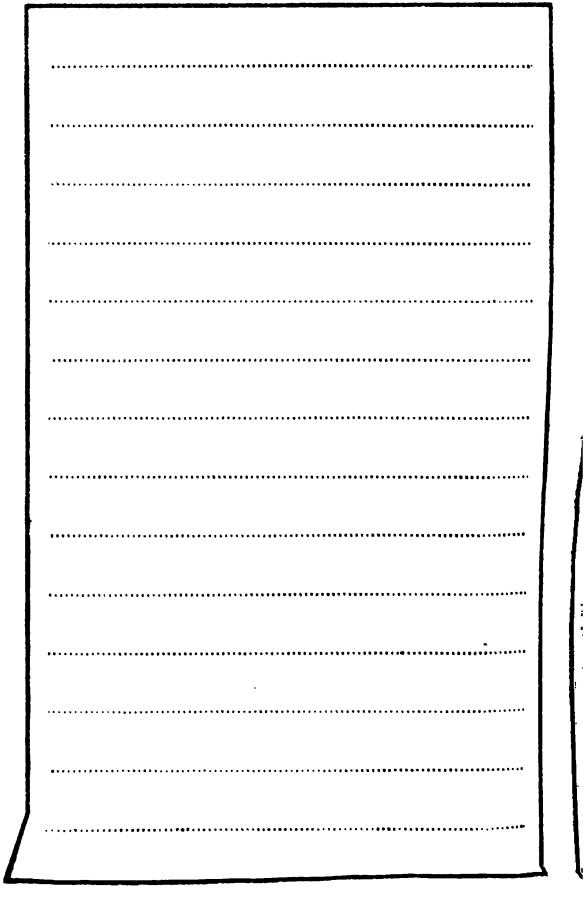
The presence of God's glory is in heaven; the presenc His power on earth; the presence of His justice in hell d the presence of His grace with His people. If He den His powerful presence, we fall into nothing; if He den His gracious presence, we fall into sin; if He deny u is merciful presence, we fall into hell."—*Rev. J. Mason.*

"Love of God, so pure and changeless;
Blood of Christ, so rich and free;
Grace of God, so rich and boundless—
Magnify it all in me."

September 15.

I die daily.—1 Cor. xv. 31.

S my warfare against sin a daily and hourly one Do I seek to carry on the continuous struggle i my own strength, or do I look to Him who alon ... fight against the wiles of the strong one ...



September 16.

That they all may be one.—JOHN xvii. 21.

DO I seek to cultivate that spirit of unity which shone so pre-eminently in the life of our blessed Saviour? Do I seek to be one with my fellow-Christians, in love to God, and love to those around me? Do I realise that all Christians are one in their desires and prayers, though differing in words and manner of expression, each having received the same spirit of adoption; therefore do I study the lesson of tolerance and forbearance?

"Christ was not ashamed to call you brethren. Then be ye brotherly. Seek to make a brother of every man. Bid him return to your Father and his Father, to your God and his God, to your Brother and his Brother. Bid him come home with you, and show him the fellowship of Christ's people."

"Christian, this thy motto be,—
Jesus says, 'Abide in me;'
Grace and strength from Him receive,
As a branch in Jesus live."

September 17.

All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.—HEB. iv. 13.

DO I live as becomes one whose most secret thoughts and most trivial actions are exposed to the closest scrutiny of an omniscient God? Does this knowledge act as a safeguard and warning-light in the hour of temptation? Does His omniscience give me comfort in the day of trouble, since He knows all that is sent, and therefore proportions strength to the trial? Does it stimulate to closer self-examination?

"If the Christian, through worldliness or any other cause, has contracted any sins which are clinging to him, let him awake to the fact, but not attempt to destroy them in his own strength. Let him go to the fountain of the Saviour's blood. There is the remedy that will cleanse them all away, will be destruction to his sins, but life to him."—*Bate.*

"Almighty God, Thy piercing eye
Strikes through the shades of night,
And our most secret actions lie
All open to Thy sight."

Septemb

hout holiness, no man shall see the Lord.—H

O I realize that unless I live upon earth a life of holiness and devotedness to God, I must not hope to live hereafter in His presence before whom the ry heavens are not clean, and who charges His angels with lly? Do I strive as far as in me lies to follow the perfect nd beautiful example left to us by our gracious Redeemer! Do I seek for God's grace so to do? Do I look forward to that glorious time, when we shall see Him as He is, all fear o sinning being then taken away, for we shall be made like Him

"Seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit by prayer throu Christ, in whatsoever you set about; nor ever forget t every moment wings its way upwards with the recor what you have thought, spoken, or done."

"Holy Spirit, dwell with me;
I myself would holy be.
Separate from sin, I would
Choose and cherish all things good."—*Lynch*

September 19.

God is fai'hful, who will not suffer you to be tempte that ye are able.—1 Cor. x. 13.

O I feel with comfort, that though the w those in it may prove false, yet God is and unfailing stay of His childre that He is *wise* as well ortion the bur

September 20.

I will arise and go to my father.—LUKE XV. 18.

M I a subject of that true repentance which shows itself in a *rising* and *going* to God? Do I acknowledge myself unworthy to receive any favour from ? Have I gone to Him as my Father—as a weary child ı with wandering, having found the pleasures of the d dross, and desiring to find rest in His forgiveness?

: now come to the Lord as a son, unworthy as I am of a privilege, and, according to His gracious word, cast ıy care upon Him. Come, then, O Lord—come, and p Thy Divine image on my soul, that I may be holy as ı art holy, pure as Thou art pure."—*Stewart.*

"Not in the near effulgence of Thy throne,
My King, I seek to worship. 'Tis enough
If, far behind the censer-bearing throng,
Who with loud voices sing the Lamb once slain,
A radiance less intense may beam on one
Who in amazement stands, and silently
Thy grace adores, that he (unfaithful oft)
Was brought within the eternal city's gates."

September 21.

I will walk in thy truth.—Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

AVE I asked the Lord to teach me to walk in His way and truth, being fully persuaded that, if left to myself, I must inevitably wander away to my everıg destruction? Am I earnestly resolved to be governed lis teachings alone? Am I anxious to be sincere in re-n, earnest in my aspirations to do exactly as my heavenly .er most approves? When difficulties beset my path, look to God for help?

:n the knowledge of God is the only true wisdom—in ıervice of God, the only true freedom—in the love of . the only true felicity; and these are all so vast, that gh they have their seed-time on earth, room for the est can be found only in heaven and eternity."

"Truthful Spirit, dwell with me—
I myself would truthful be—
And with wisdom kind and clear
Let Thy life in mine appear,
And with actions brotherly
Speak my Lord's sincerity."—*Lynch.*

September 22.

Thou hast loosed my bonds.—Ps. cxvi. 16.

AM I a child of God, or a slave to sin? Having once known the hardness of Satan as a taskmaster, do I rejoice with thankfulness in my present state of liberty? Do I use that liberty, not as a cause of offence to God, but as a further incentive to work in His service, and seek to bring others into the same blessed state of freedom? Have I been enabled to fling aside the galling chain of unbelief and doubt, taking God unquestioningly at His word?

"The man who has received the spirit of adoption no longer acts as a slave, who regards his duties as a burden, and endeavours to lessen them. On the contrary, he delights in duty, because he delights in God. He is *at home* with God his Father; and as it were conversing with Him, while engaged in His service."—*Milner.*

"Ignorance bound me,
And Satan tossed me;
But Jesus found me,
And Satan lost me."

September 23.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Ps. lxvi. 18.

IS there any *heart*-sin to which I allow a dwelling-place—which I indulge, and feel unwilling to part with? Should such be the case, am I, like David, sincere in my desire that its hold should be loosened, and my heart purified from the pollution of its presence? Do I realize fully that sin indulged is a fatal hindrance to the efficacy of prayer, as well as to a favourable hearing from God? Do I pray for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit to be enabled to find out and part with the sin?

"Sin is that which interposeth itself between the soul and the light of God's countenance. But whether it be a slender mist or a thick cloud, an infirmity or a rebellion, the Sun of Righteousness, eyed by faith, can and will dispel it, so as to make it vanish."—*Arrowsmith.*

"Behold me, Lord; and if Thou find
A root of bitterness within,
Though were the wealth of worlds resigned,
O cleanse me from my secret sin!"

September 24.

The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed.—1 Sam. ii. 3.

WHEN feeling cast down and pained through the misconstruction of my words and actions, may I not derive comfort from this fact, that no earthly judgment can affect the judgment of the Most High; that He knows all things from their beginning to their end; and that He understands what man fails to grasp? Do I realize that the Lord weighs and values the action, not by its greatness, but by its actuating motive?

"Our actions must clothe us with an immortality loathsome or glorious. These are the only *title-deeds* of which we cannot be disinherited. They will have their full weight in the balance of eternity; and their value shall be established by those two sure destroyers of all *other* earthly things—Time and Death."—*Colton.*

"Each heart is manifest to Thee;
Thou knowest our infirmity:
Repentant now we seek Thy face;
Impart to us Thy pardoning grace."

September 25.

How shall I give thee up?—Hosea xi. 8.

CAN I read this wail of Deity, and remain callous, unmoved? Does this long-suffering of the God of mercy awake no corresponding echo in my heart? Am I willing that God should give me up, take His Holy Spirit from me, and leave me to my own devices? Can I with calmness barter the future of eternal happiness for the pleasures of sin, that perish in the using, the end thereof being death—eternal banishment from God's presence?

"Oh, unconverted sinner, when we come to give the parting hand to you, how different it will be if you have not the love of Christ! When we separate at the river of Death, which to-morrow we may reach, it will be with no hope of re-union. It will be parting with no hope of ever, ever meeting again. Can you bear this thought?"

"What shall soothe thy bursting heart,
When the saints and thou must part?
When the good with joy are crowned,
Sinner, where wilt thou be found?"

September 28.

What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?—MARK viii. 36.

DO I seek to remember that though the Lord designs us to find pleasure in the things of His hand, yet He never meant us to place our happiness in them? Do I realize that when the things of life interpose between our immortal souls and God, then they become sin, as anything that dims or veils the nearing future must become? Do I make it a subject matter of prayer, that though in the world, my heart may be fixed on the things of God?

"The poorest Christian who lives upon Christ, and walks in daily fellowship with God, is happier than the richest worldling. Indeed, such only are happy."—*German.*

"Look to Jesus, prayerful, waking,
When thy feet on roses tread;
Follow, worldly pomp forsaking,
With thy cross where He hath led.
Look to Jesus in temptation:
Baffled shall the Tempter flee,
And God's angels come to thee."—*Fraugen.*

September 29.

Holding forth the word of life.—PHIL. ii. 16.

DO I feel it to be my duty, not only to hold *fast*, but to hold *forth*, the word of life; not merely to hold it fast for my own benefit, but to hold it forth for the benefit of others? Do I remember that it is the duty of the Christian, not only to seek to approve himself to God, but to recommend his religion to others, and so glorify God? Am I ever ashamed of speaking for God?

"Wilt thou not stir up all the vigour of grace within thee to do great service for thy Saviour on earth, that thy reward in heaven may not be small? Remember that Jesus, the Judge, is coming apace. He has rewards with Him of every size; and the lustre and weight of thy crown shall be most exactly to thy sweat and labour."—*Harbaugh.*

"Thou must thyself be true,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another's soul wouldst reach:
It needs the overflowing heart
To give the lips full speech."

September 30.

Lo, I am with you alway.—MATT. xxviii. 20.

DO I realize that Jesus is always spiritually present with His people? Do I remember that there is not anything which happens to His people without His knowledge? Does the consciousness of that ever-abiding presence give me rest, or unrest? Does it trouble me to know that Jesus knows and takes note of all my thoughts?

"What shall be the practical result of this truth upon our hearts and lives? Shall it be to engender sloth, or a lack of watchfulness? Nay; rather let it spur us onward to renewed diligence in the Master's service—for we work beneath His eye—and to a spirit of more careful watchfulness, lest there be aught in our walk and conversation that would grieve His loving heart."

"They who know the Saviour's name
Are for all events prepared:
What can mortals do to them
Who have such a Guide and Guard?"

October 1.

I sleep, but my heart waketh.—CANT. v. 2.

DO I realize that spiritual coldness, if not watched against, is apt to gain ground, to the exclusion of growth in godliness? Do I not find at times an inclination to neglect my duty; a desire for self-indulgence and ease? Do I strive against this insidious foe in the spirit of prayer? Have I not found that even when in this state of spiritual torpor, my heart is awake, my conscience is clamouring for a hearing—showing that Christ is still striving with me, telling me to be up and doing?

"We must be diligent, devoted, earnest in our Master's service, if we would be kept from being cold, and lifeless, and useless. We should aim to be too active to stagnate, too busy to freeze. There is work enough to be done; and the injunction is, that *we* do with our might what our hands find to do."

"Whate'er pursuits my time employ,
One thought shall fill my soul with joy;
That silent, secret thought shall be,
That all my hopes are fixed on Thee—
On Thee, my God, on Thee!"

October 2.

Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted.—MICAH ii. 10.

DO I realize that this world is polluted through sin, and that it is therefore necessary to keep at a great distance from its corruptions—"to keep ourselves unspotted from the world"? Are my aspirations heavenward, or do I seek in things of earth my rest? Do I look upon this world as it was designed to be—a mere passage to a home, not a home itself?

"If we live with God here below, we shall live with Him above. In heaven all God's servants will be abundantly satisfied with His dealings and dispensations. We may hope for a place in heaven, if our hearts are made suitable to the state of heaven."

"Fond Earth! proportion not my seeming love
To my long stay; let not my thoughts deceive thee:
Thou art my prison, and my home's above—
My life's a preparation but to leave thee;
Like one that seeks a door, I walk about thee;
With thee I cannot live—I cannot live without thee."—*Quarles.*

October 3.

He that watereth shall be watered also himself.—PROV. xi. 25.

DO I realize that the liberal soul that prays for God's poor—that provides for them, and scatters blessings with a free and bounteous hand, accompanying them with words of instruction and comfort—shall be enriched with more grace, and abundantly rewarded in the world to come? Do I seek to water others from the pure, unadulterated stream that comes from the Word, remembering that he that teaches learns, and teaches himself?

"The more you are like unto God, the happier you shall be; and God receives not, but gives. Why should I not give a few crumbs to my Saviour, who daily supplieth my table, and giveth me all things richly to enjoy? Do I wish to receive more from Him? Then give the more."—*Müller.*

"The smallest effort is not lost:
Each wavelet on the ocean tost
Aids in the ebb-tide or the flow;
Each rain-drop makes some flowerct blow;
Each struggle lessens human woe."

DO I realize that wilful sinners are
stroyers, since they wilfully reject G
of mercy? Will God ever have to
would have helped thee and healed thee, but
not; thou wert bent on thine own destructi
laid hold on this plank thrown out for me to
I gladly and thankfully accepted this gracious

"The natural man is a spiritual monster.
where his feet should be—fixed upon earth:
lifted up against heaven, which his heart sho
His face is towards hell; his back towards
hates what he should love, and loves what he
glories in his shame, and is ashamed of his gl

"Mighty Spirit, dwell with me;
I myself would mighty be—
Mighty, so as to prevail
Where, unaided, man must fail."—

October 5.

My God shall supply all your need.—P

HAVE I been seeking in things of
for the need and craving of my
Having found its utter inadequac
I turned to the All-sufficient and Almight
earthly and spiritual needs? Do I realize
Christ Jesus; that it is through Him we
do anything or to be anything that is goo

"If there had not been such a thing as t
have long since given up the ho

October 6.

If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him.—HEB. x. 38.

HAVE I ever felt that it is possible to be near the kingdom of heaven and yet to be turned back by an unexpected obstruction, never, it may be, to retread the narrow road? Do I realize that the further we depart from God, the nearer we approach to ruin? Having felt God's sustaining power in past trials, should not that be a sufficient guarantee that that same strength will be sufficient for any present or future time of trial?

"Backsliding develops itself in indifference to prayer and self-examination, trifling or unprofitable conversation, neglect of public ordinances, shunning the people of God, associating with the world, thinking lightly of sin, and neglect of the Bible, ending in a rapid run to perdition."—*Buck.*

"Shrink not, Christians; will ye yield?
Will ye quit the painful field?
Will ye flee in danger's hour?
Know ye not your Captain's power?"—*H. K. White.*

October 7.

The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up.—Ps. lxix. 9.

AM I zealous that my conduct and walk through life should bring honour to God? Am I anxious to promote His gospel among men? Am I an unwearied labourer in God's vineyard, working in season and out of season? Am I an unconcerned listener when dishonour is cast upon the name of God, or do I take my stand as a bold, unflinching champion for the cross of Christ?

"Zeal is a principle, enthusiasm a feeling: the one is a spark of a sanguine temperament and over-heated imagination; the other is a holy flame, kindled at God's altar, and burning in God's shrine."—*Vaughan.*

"Oh that every hair of my head, every member of my body, were a man to witness a good confession for Him!"—*Rutherford.*

"Thy mercies to my heart revealed,
A theme of endless transport yield;
Thy love does all my bosom fire;
Thy grace does all my song inspire."

October 8.

They all with one consent began to make excuse.—LUKE xiv. 18.

HAVE I accepted the offer of salvation; or am I putting off its consideration until some future day, allowing the things of time to have the first place in my heart? Do I realize that grace despised is grace forfeited; and that if we do not have Christ when we may, we shall not have Him when we would? Do I remember that this invitation applies to all, and that there is room for all?

"The real man is one who always finds excuses for others, but never excuses himself. How many would come to church, but they say they want fit clothes, or they want to look after their house, or they want a seat of their own at church! They want time, they want rest, they want—but their wants are innumerable; yet they never name one want which swallows up all others—*the will.*"

"Let vain excuses cease,
And hasten to the feast,
Where Jesus feeds the soul with peace,
And gives the weary rest."

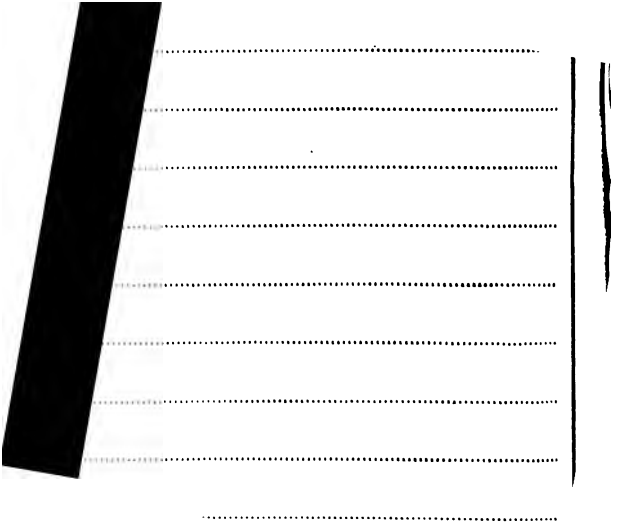
October 9.

As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk.
1 COR. vii. 17.

AM I endeavouring to walk according to my high and holy calling? Am I ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Am I one of those who, through cowardice, dread of ridicule, or some other equally lowering motive, pander to the sin of those around them? Do I ever remember that if I am ashamed to confess Christ here, He will be ashamed of me in the great and terrible day of His coming? Do I seek for strength to walk aright, and to confess with boldness whose disciple I am? Am I willing to be led by the Lord?

"Happy are they who dare venture out in the open street with the name of Christ upon their foreheads, at a time when many are ashamed of Him, and hide Him (as it were) under their cloaks, as if He were a stolen Saviour."—*Rutherford.*

"Walk in the light, and thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His,
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrined,
In whom no darkness is."



October 10.

The thought of foolishness is sin.—PROV. xxiv. 9.

DO I realize that in God's sight we contract guilt, not only by the act of foolishness, but by its very thought? Do I watch prayerfully against the first risings of sin in my heart, knowing that they are offensive to God, and must be repented of as much as of actual sin? Do I endeavour so to regulate my life that there can be no time for thoughts of foolishness?

"It is right that he whom God hath highly exalted should aspire after high things, and none are higher than those which are heavenly and divine. But let him whom the Most High has placed in a low estate comfort himself with the thought that godly humility is the shortest way to true greatness."—*Gotthold.*

"With self-accusing voice within,
Our conscience tells of many a sin
In thought, and word, and deed:
Cleanse that conscience from each stain,
The penitent restore again,
From every burden freed."

October 11.

Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.—JAMES i. 21.

DO I come to God's Word with a *prepared* heart, having flung aside all preconceived notions, with those self-exalting thoughts which pervert the judgment and warp the mind? When hearing the Word of God, do I *receive* it, *assent* to its truths, and *consent* to its laws?

"If you come to God's Word as He requires, you will require to give up many preconceived opinions and fondly cherished notions of your own. You will, perhaps, have to unlearn much that you have tried to learn. Come with a humble, praying spirit, asking the Lord to teach you with wisdom from above. Let the mountains of self-sufficiency flow down at His presence."

"When Holy Scripture I peruse,
And o'er its sacred pages muse,
Oh, then Thy precious word fulfil;
And while I seek to learn Thy will,
Draw near in answer to my prayer,
And, gracious Saviour, meet me *there*."

October 12.

Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.—1 SAM. iii. 9.

DO I listen to the voice of God in His Word, in His providences, in His dispensations? Do I follow the teachings of that Voice, or do I seek for teaching from any other source? Am I one of God's faithful servants? Do I seek to do His will, searching for opportunities of so doing? Do I prefer God's will to my own at all times, whether pleasing to me or not? Am I ever on the alert to hear the voice of the Lord and to obey?

"Religion, in its rise, interests us almost exclusively about ourselves; in its progress, it engages us about the welfare of our fellow-creatures; in its more advanced stages, it animates us to consult all things, and to exalt to the utmost of our power the honour of our God."

"Speak Thou unto my heart; and let no sage's word,
No teacher Thee beside explain to me Thy holy law.
Let every soul before Thy presence, Lord,
Bow down in silent awe,
And let Thy voice be heard."

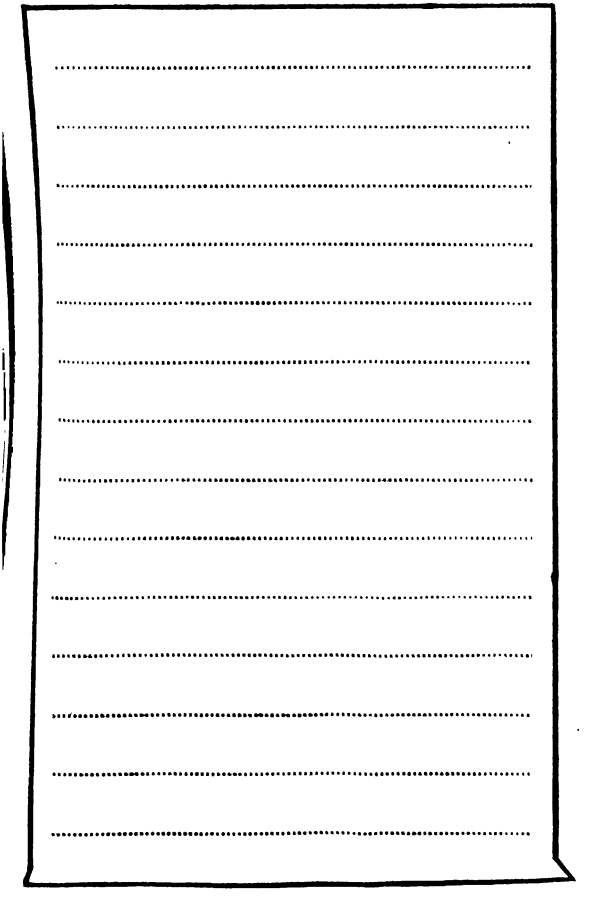
October 18.

What lack I yet?—MATT. xix. 20.

DO I ask for the enlightenment of the Spirit, to be enabled to find out if there be any cherished, secret sin, which may be interposing between God and my soul? Do I pray for daily-increasing knowledge of my own sinfulness, and for a more thankful appreciation of the Saviour's atoning sacrifice? Am I willing to give up all that would keep me back from treading with faithful zeal the narrow, thorny road that leads to heaven?

"One bosom sin determinately retained will harden the heart, stupefy the conscience, darken the mind. It will resist and overcome inward monitions; it will frustrate and render nugatory all influences from without."—*Binney.*

"Traveller, see thy gracious day
Swiftly drawing to the end;
Mend thy pace, pursue thy way,
Ere the shades of night descend.
Fear to lose a moment's space,
Walk, advance, and hasten on;
And when death concludes thy race,
Dying, shout, 'The work is done!'"



October 14.

The root of the matter is found in me.—JOB xix. 28.

DO I realize that a living, quickening, commanding principle of grace in the heart, is the root of the matter, as necessary to the vitality of our religion as the root to the tree? Does love to God and His people, faith in Christ, hatred of sin, as evidenced in my life, show that "the root of the matter" is found in me? Do I feel that it is all-important that the root of the matter be in me, real godliness being the one thing needful?

"Grace is a spring whose waters fail not; but the streams of gifts may be dried up. If grace be corruptible in its own nature, as being but a creature, yet it is incorruptible in regard of its Conserver, as being the *new* creature. He that did create it in us, will conserve it in us. He that did begin it, will also finish it."—*Mead.*

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart."

October 15.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.
PHIL. ii. 5.

DOES the pre-eminently humble mind of the Saviour dwell in me? Do I seek to learn of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart"? Do I seek to imitate Jesus, who was good and kind to all, who never spoke an angry word, nor wounded the feelings of even the greatest sinner? Does the Saviour's mind of obedience and submission to the will of God dwell within me? Do I, like Him, take up my cross daily, denying myself for the sake of others, bearing it patiently?

"Wherever a care is to be lightened; wherever a kind word, or even a kind look, can give relief; wherever forbearance can be manifested, forgiveness shown, or any good done—by the doing of all these, we can show that the Saviour's mind is in us."

"All that feeds my busy pride,
Cast it evermore aside;
Bid my will to Thine submit,
Lay me humbly at Thy feet."

October 16.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me.—Ps. l. 23.

DO I offer to God the sacrifice of praise daily and hourly, not waiting for the manifesting of special mercies, but rendering thanks for my many daily blessings? Is it the great aim of my life to glorify God? May I not do this by passing through life cheerfully and uncomplainingly, looking as if I *felt* as well as *knew* that God was good to me? Is my praise-offering the result of love to God?

"Cheerfulness and a festival spirit fill the soul full of harmony; it makes and publishes glorifications of God; it produces thankfulness, and serves the end of charity; and when the oil of gladness runs over, it makes bright emissions of light, and holy fires, reaching up to a cloud, making joy round about it."—*Bishop Taylor.*

"Sing of His dying love;
Sing of His rising power;
Sing how He intercedes above;
Sing, till we feel our hearts
Ascending with our tongues."—*Madan.*

October 17.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.
Ps. xix. 7.

DO I realize that the Word of the Lord is sure; what we may give credit to, may rely upon, and feel confident that it will never deceive us, having for its foundation the Rock of Ages? Do I feel that it is a sure guide into the way of truth, able to make us "wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. iii. 15); so plain and simple, that even those who may not be wise for the things of time can from it learn to be wise for their souls and eternity?

"Other books may render men learned unto ostentation; but the Bible only can make them really wise unto salvation."—*Arrowsmith.*

"Do not any of you think that ye are wise enough to teach the Bible; but let the Bible teach you."—*Fauch.*

"Great Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Bless the dark world with heavenly light!
Thy gospel makes the simple wise;
Thy laws are pure, Thy judgments right."

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October 18.

Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.—2 Cor. ii. 11.

O I always endeavour to keep in mind that Satan is a most subtle enemy, as well as sleepless in vigilance, ever seeking to entrap the unwary and care-his snares? Do I realise that he is a watchful enemy, to take every advantage against us? Do I seek for to enable me to detect and avoid his devices, even he comes as an angel of light to tempt and to destroy?

e first step towards strength is to know our weakness. to be steadfast, not in self, but in faith; confident , relying upon His promises, His wisdom, power, and We are to meet temptation in such a spirit as this, that all temptation, with Satan its author, is com-subject to God."

> "Why should I fear the darkest hour,
> Or tremble at the Tempter's power?
> Jesus vouchsafes to be my tower.
> Though hot the fight, why quit the field?
> Why must I either fly or yield,
> Since Jesus is my mighty shield?"

October 19.

Rejoice in the Lord alway.—Phil. iv. 4.

O I realize that all my joy must not only find its source in God, but terminate in Him? Do I feel it to be my duty and privilege to *rejoice* in God, rejoice in Him *always*—at all times, and under all stances, even when I suffer for Him, or when He sees end trouble? Do I remember that I must not think hings of God, when His ways are not my ways, seeing ven in the darkest time there is enough in God to subject matter for rejoicing?

e joy of the Christian is not on the surface, but deep in the recesses of the heart, making holiday If Christians do not rejoice, it is because they do e up to their privileges."

> "Source of my life's refreshing springs,
> Whose presence in my heart sustains me,
> Thy love appoints me pleasant things,
> Thy mercy orders all that pains me."—*Waring.*

October 20.

Abhor that which is evil.—ROM. xii. 9.

HAVE I that abhorrence of sin which shrinks at its very approach, and, scenting it from afar, keeps, by God's grace, from its tainting influence? Do I hate sin on account of its present and future consequences; or do I hate sin because it is hateful to God, as well as most grieving to a loving and forgiving Father? Do I hate sin because each sin crucifies my Redeemer afresh? Do I hate sin because it extorts groans of suffering from the Spirit?

"We must abhor ourselves for our sins, not from mere earthly principles, but for the manifold indignities offered by our sins to God—to the law of His justice, to the awe of His majesty, to the reverent record of His reverence, to the dread of His power, and to the long-suffering of His love."—*Bishop Andrewes.*

"Walk in the light, and sin, abhorred,
Shall not defile again;
The blood of Jesus Christ the Lord
Shall cleanse from every stain."

October 21.

That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.—TITUS ii. 10.

DO I recommend the gospel and Christ's holy religion to others, by my meek and faithful conduct in all things and to all men? Do I seek to dismiss from my mind the false idea that it requires a certain position in the world's estimation before my adorning of the religion of Christ can have any influence or bearing on others?

"By doing without weariness, and by suffering without murmuring; by letting your hands be active in the service and your feet swift in the way of God's commandments;—thus may your bodies participate, and be used by the spirits which tenant them in this hallowed service. Dust they are, but they can bring praise to Him who formed them."

"Who are the blessed?
They who have kept their sympathies awake,
And scattered joy for more than custom's sake—
Steadfast and tender in the hour of need,
Gentle in thought, benevolent in deed—
Whose looks have power to make dissensions cease—
Whose smile is pleasant, and whose minds are peace."

October 22.

Consider your ways.—HAGGAI i. 5.

IS it not right to apply my mind with all seriousness to the great and necessary duty of self-examination, and to commune with my own heart concerning the state of my soul? Do I realize that sin is what I must answer for, duty what I must do, leaving consequences to God? Am I more anxious to pry into and consider the ways of others, than into my own ways? Has the consideration of my ways led me to amend whatever was amiss in them?

"The sins of men go before them. They go before them to the judgment, and will be ready to meet them there. What a fearful meeting! How impossible to escape from their accusing and consequences."—*Jeffries.*

"The world's a labyrinth, whose anfractuous ways
Are all composed of rubs, and crooked meanders.
No resting here; he's hurried back that stays
A thought; and he that goes unguided, wanders.
Her way is dark, her path untrod, uneven:
So hard's the way from earth, so hard's the way to heaven."—*Quarles.*

October 23.

Quench not the Spirit.—1 THESS. v. 19.

DO I always listen to the voice of conscience when it whispers its warning note in the time of temptation? Am I careful, in this way, not to quench the Holy Spirit, which is as fire in the soul, enlightening, enlivening, and purifying; clearing away the mists of sin, and displaying the forgiving majesty of Deity to the repentant sinner?

"How many are there who say, 'Oh, but my heart is not humbled! Oh, but I am a great sinner! and should I venture upon Jesus Christ?' O reader! quench not the Spirit by these wrong feelings. Will this heart be more humbled by keeping away from Jesus Christ? Wilt thou be less a sinner by keeping from Him? No, certainly; for the longer you stay from Christ, the harder it will be to venture on him at last."—*Brydges.*

"Spirit of Life! with Thy pure love inspire
My longing spirit as it upward turns;
Kindle and nurse to strength the heavenly fire
Which in my penitence so feebly burns."

October 24.

He hath done all things well.—MARK vii. 37.

DO I feel that the "all things" are well—joy and sorrow, storm and sunshine—all alike; that because my Father, who loves me, and who knows better than all what is for my good, sends them, they must be for my good? Have I not more than once felt, when the sun of happiness beamed unclouded, and all around was very bright, that I wanted nothing more; the unseen realities of the heavenly world had almost faded from sight; I was content to live here always? When the hand of God darkened the sunshine, and thus brought the wanderer back, was not that well?

"Children of Christ, your trials are meted out by a tender hand. He *knows* you *too* well, He loves you too well, to make this world tearless and sorrowless. There must be rain, and hail, and storm in the saint's cloud."—*Rutherford.*

"So do the winds and thunders cleanse the air;
So working bees settle and purge the wine;
So lopped and pruned trees do flourish;
So doth the fire the drossy gold refine."

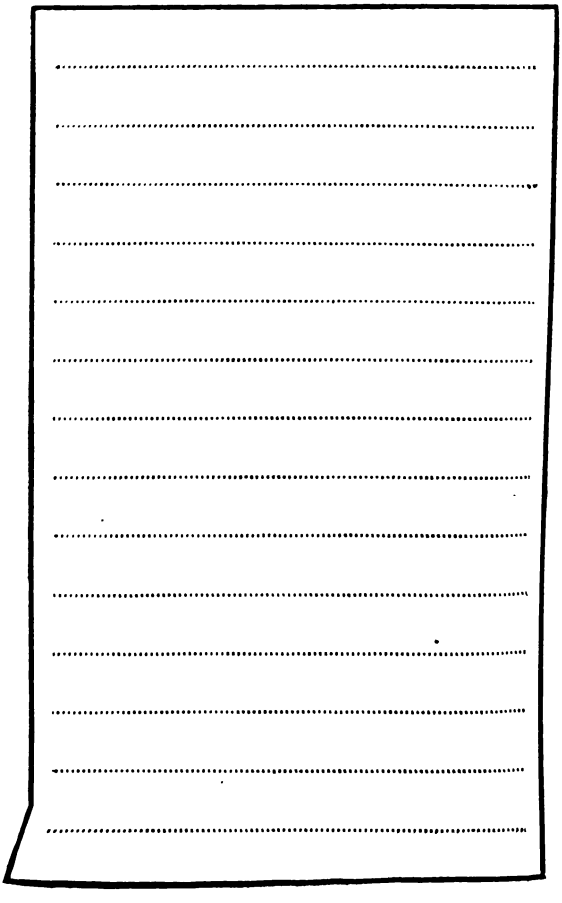
October 25.

My Beloved is mine, and I am His.—CANT. ii. 16.

DO I realize that our communion with God is very much maintained and kept up by the frequent renewing of our covenant with Him, and rejoicing in it? When I have been careless and wanting in my duty, and God hides His face from me, do I still feel that His rebukes and chastenings but emanate from covenant love? If I have not the sensible assurance that I am Christ's, do I still seek to banish fear, since that will not alter the blessed truth that He is mine?

"His loving eye follows me day by day to the wilderness, studies my wants, and trials, and sorrows, and perplexities. He goeth before me. He does not take me over an untrodden path. He Himself has trodden it before."—*Macduff.*

"I'm His by penitence, He mine by grace;
I'm His by purchase, He is mine by blood;
He's my supporting clue, and I His bind;
Thus I my best Beloved's am, thus He is mine."—*Quarl*



October 26.

A chief corner stone.—1 PETER ii. 6.

DO I regard my Saviour as the chief corner-stone that God has laid in His spiritual church? Do I realize that as the corner-stone is the support of the building, uniting and adorning it, so the Saviour is the support of His people, their strong Rock to which to cling when the blasts of unbelief and unsound doctrine threaten to shake their faith to pieces? Do I rest solely on Christ?

"The believers' hold of Jesus is their guarantee. And as the tree must die, or the rock fall, before a dissolution could be effected between them; so either the believer must lose his hold of spiritual life, or the Rock must crumble, ere the union can be dissolved. Believer, which shall it be?"—*Bate.*

"On Thee, then, as a sure foundation,
A tried corner-stone,
Lord, I will strive to raise
The tower of my salvation, and Thy praise.
In Thee, as in my centre, shall
The lines of all my longings fall."—*Quarles.*

October 27.

He hath prepared for them a city.—HEB. xi. 16.

DO I realize that there must be a prepared people for a prepared city; and that, if I would attain to its blessedness, I must live a prepared life? Am I working the works that my Father sent me on earth to work; living a life of self-denying obedience to His commands, and loving my neighbour as myself? Am I willing to take up the cross here, so as to wear the crown hereafter?

"The great Counsellor puts clouds and darkness round about Him, bidding us follow at His beck through the cloud, promising an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side, in the prepared city. And there we shall see how every rough wind has been hastening our barks nearer the desired haven."—*Brooks.*

"Onward! the goal thou seekest
Is worthy the quest of a life,
And love can give to the weakest
Courage and strength for the strife.
Onward! our cry for ever,
Till our glorious goal be won,
'Mid the brightness, fading never,
Of the light-enshrouded sun."

October 28.

Go work to-day in my vineyard.—MATT. xxi. 28.

SINCE God has not sent me into the world to be idle, if ever I mean to do anything for God and my soul, why not now? Why not to-day? for "the night cometh, when no man can work." Is it the command of a loving Father, carrying with it both authority and affection—a Father who pities His children, considers their frame, and will put on them no more than they can bear? Does the love of the world prevent my working in the Lord's vineyard?

"Reader! are you a fruit-bearer in your Lord's vineyard? Are you seeking to make life one grand act of consecration to His glory? Wondrous thought! from the worthless efforts of a sinning mortal may roll in a wave of glory, which He who loves the broken and contrite spirit will not despise. 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.'"

"Go work to-day in my vineyard!
'Tis your Father's voice, His call;
Believers, be up and doing,
There is work for each and all."

October 29.

Ye shall be a blessing.—ZECH. viii. 13.

DO I lay myself out for the good of those about me? Do I long that others should partake of the same blessings with which God has blessed me? If spiritual, do I labour with my whole heart and mind for the perishing souls that are on every side? If temporal, do I, as far as in my power lies, endeavour to relieve the bodily necessities of God's poor?

"There are joys which long to be ours. God sends ten thousand truths, which come about us like birds seeking inlet; but we are shut up to them, and so they bring us nothing: they sit and sing awhile upon the roof, and then fly away. Religion does not consist so much in joyful feelings, as in a constant exercise of devotedness to God, and in laying ourselves out for the good of others."

"Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?
Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?
Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief?—
Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold."

October 30.

Let us labour to enter into that rest.—HEB. iv. 11.

DO I seek to rest *in* Christ on earth, and *with* Christ in heaven? Do I realise that labour—diligent labour in the field of my own heart, and in the field of the world—is the only way to rest; and that they who will not work now, shall not rest hereafter? Does not the knowledge that, after this due and diligent labour, sweet, satisfying, and never-ending rest shall follow, make the present toil pleasant? Do I seek to stir others up, to make them labour too?

"Oh, how many precious moments are wasted in softness and self-indulgence, in frivolous pursuits, in idle conversation, in vague and useless revelry, which, if rightly improved, might tell upon the world's destiny and the Redeemer's glory!"—*Clarke.*

"O may we now insure
Our lot among the blest,
And watch a moment, to secure
An everlasting rest!"

October 31.

Where I am there shall also my servant be.—JOHN xii. 26.

DO I long to be with Jesus? Are the things of the world as dross in my sight, compared with the blessed hope of being with HIM for ever? Do I look forward to heaven, not merely as a rest, but because I shall see my Saviour face to face, and, purified from the garment spotted with the flesh, shall be made like HIM? Am I following my Divine Master now, as one who looks forward to the incomparable honour and blessedness of sharing His glory hereafter?

"Our Saviour's last prayer on earth is an importunate pleading for His servants' glorification; His parting wish is to meet them in heaven, as if these earthly jewels were needed to make His crown complete—their happiness and joy the needful complement of His own!"

"There shall temptations cease;
My frailties there shall end;
There shall I rest in peace,
In the arms of my best Friend."—*Crossman.*

November 1.

***Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of a things.*—MATT. vi. 32.**

DO I realise that my heavenly Father kno wants better than I do myself—no bodil too small to be overlooked by Him; that He is in heaven, and His children on earth, yet *He* what the least and the poorest of them has ne Why do I not go to my heavenly Friend, and tell *He knows* my troubles. Do I remember that thou knows my troubles, yet He likes me to tell Him of t

"Thy Marahs as well as thy Elims are appointed b A gracious pillar-cloud is before thee. Follow it t sunshine and storm. He will not lead thee wron thine unerring Parent, *knoweth* that thou hast nee these things."—*Macduff.*

"No profit canst thou gain
By self-consuming care
To Him commend thy cause, His ear
Attends the softest prayer!"—*Gerhardt.*

November 2.

Take heed unto thyself.—1 TIM. iv. 16.

HAVE I taken heed to myself, taken heed to s the salvation of my immortal soul is g Have I taken heed that the blood of the L God has been sprinkled on my sin-stained soul? Do heed that my life and conversation be such as becon children of God? Do I take heed that my doctrine i doctrine, based on God's holy Word? Do I take l lead others to a consideration of those things whi cern their immortal souls?

"Whatever a man may be doing, 'as he thinketh heart, so is he;' if his aims are low, and his plans ear is he; and if his motives are pure, and his purpos and heavenly, so is he; and as he is, so is his work."-

"Tremblers beside the grave,
We call on Thee to save,
Father Divine!
Hear, hear our suppliant breath,
Keep us, in life and death,
Thine, only Thine!"

November 3.

Though it tarry, wait for it.—HAB. ii. 3.

WHEN I have been praying to God, telling Him all my troubles, and seeking His help, do I look up in hopeful anticipation that the Lord will answer my prayer? Do I realize that God has an appointed time for His appointed work, and will be sure to do the work when the time comes; but it is not for us to anticipate His intentions, but patiently to bide His time? Is it not a matter for great encouragement, that though the answer may tarry, it will come?

"The answer may tarry: these your supplications may seem to be kept long on the wing, hovering around the mercy-seat. A gracious God sometimes sees fit thus to test the faith and patience of His people. But He will come at last."

"There is a time to wait,
Let us that time abide;
God's hand of love will bless, though late,
Those who in Him confide."

November 4.

Because I live, ye shall live also.—JOHN xiv. 19.

AM I alive to the interests of my never-dying soul? Am I striving to live a life of faith in my Redeemer? Do I realize that the life of the Christian is bound up in the life of the Redeemer: that as He lives eternally, so shall His people; that their bodies shall rise in virtue of His resurrection; that it will be well with them in the world to come, as it must be well with all that are His, both here and hereafter? (Isa. xxvi. 19.)

"Believer! read in this word of Jesus thy glorious title-deed. Thy Saviour lives, and His life is the guarantee of thine own. That life of His is all that is between us and everlasting ruin. But with Christ for our life, how inviolate our security! Satan must first pluck the crown from that glorified head, ere he can touch one jewel in the crown of His people."—*Macduff.*

"Oh, may I live with Jesus nigh,
And sleep in Jesus when I die!
Then, joyful, when from death I wake,
I shall eternal bliss partake."—*Medley.*

November 5.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.—1 Thess. v. 22.

DO I realize that those who shrink not from the appearances of sin, who shun not the occasions of sin, and who avoid not the temptations and approaches to sin, will not long abstain from the *actual commission* of sin? Am I willing to refrain from anything which, though not in itself wrong, yet, bearing the appearance of wrong, might on that account prove a stumbling-block in the way of some believer whose faith is weak?

"A thing may have the appearance of evil, and not be evil in itself; just as an apple may have the appearance of sweetness and soundness, and yet be both sour and rotten in reality. A Christian is called to refrain from some things which, though actually right, yet will not bear a good appearance to all men."—*Cecil.*

"'Tis Thine to wrest, or Thine to wean,
Our souls from all but Thee;
Oh, make them what they have not been,
And what they fain would be."

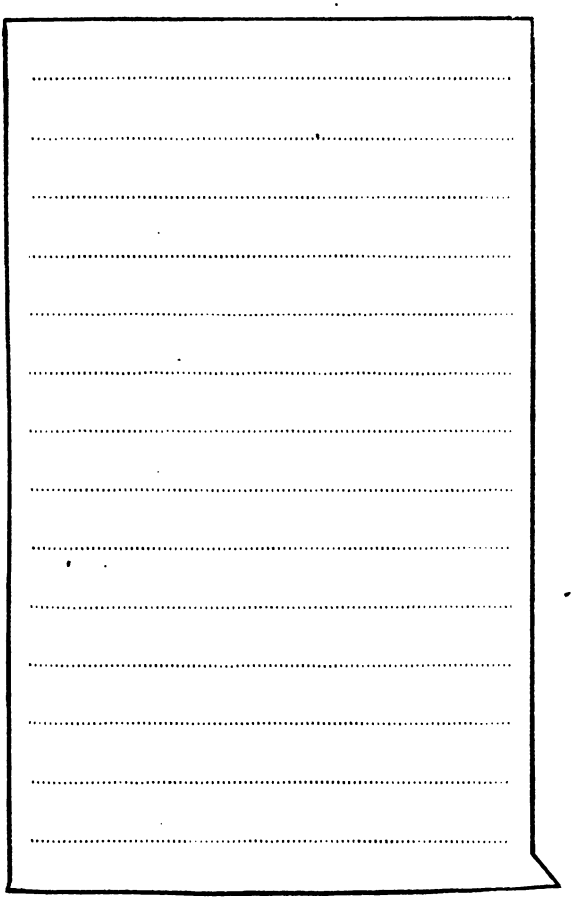
November 6.

Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.—Luke xii. 48.

DO I make diligent use of God's Word, of prayer, of the many and various means of grace provided to guide the soul from earth to heaven? Do I realize that those to whom God has given greater capacities of mind than others, more knowledge and more learning, more acquaintance and converse with the Scriptures, to them *much* is given, and of them shall *much* be required?

"I see in this world," says a good man, "two heaps of human happiness and misery: now, if I can take but the smallest bit from one heap and add it to the other, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and if, by giving it another, I can wipe away its tears, I feel I have done something. I should be glad to do greater things, but I will not neglect this."

"That man may *last*, but never lives,
Who much receives, but nothing gives;
Whom none can love, whom none can thank,—
Creation's blot, creation's blank."



November 7.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind.—1 Cor. xiii. 4.

WHAT is charity? Is it not that which endures injury and provocation without being filled with resentment or revenge? Does not charity make the mind firm, giving it power over the angry passions, giving that patience which prays and waits for the reformation of a brother, rather than give way to passion at some untoward conduct? Is not charity benign, bountiful, courteous, obliging? "The law of kindness is in her lips."

"'The nail of reproof,'" says an old writer, "'must be well oiled in kindness before it is driven home.' The great thing is to show the person that you really love him; and if you manifest this in the sight of God, He will bless your efforts, and give you favour in the sight of your erring brothers."

"The sandal-tree perfumes, when riven,
The axe that laid it low;
Let man, who hopes to be forgiven,
Forgive and bless his foe."

November 8.

With both hands earnestly.—Micah vii. 3.

AM I earnest in religion, not halting between God and the world? Am I earnest in doing God's work, in season and out of season? Do I watch the opportunities, not allowing them to glide from my grasp through carelessness or a love of ease? Do I pray to God for His Spirit to enable me to be earnest, decided, and whole-hearted in religion, that, should death come unawares, it may not find me sleeping?

"It may seem a possible thing just now, by avoiding all extremes and all *thoroughness*, either in religion or in worldliness, to conform to both of these; but in the day of the separation of the real from the unreal, it will be discovered to have been a failure for eternity—a failure as complete as it is disastrous and remediless."—*Bonar.*

"Fill up each hour with what will last,
Buy up the moments as they go;
The life above, when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below."—*Bonar.*

November 9.

I have set before thee an open door.—Rev. iii. 8.

HAVE I entered in? Have I accepted the full and free plan of salvation which Christ the Saviour has placed at my acceptance? Do I realize that that door will not always be open; that if God's offers are rejected, His long-suffering will become exhausted, and, leaving the wilful sinner alone, death may close the open door? Do I seek to induce others to enter in and be safe? Am I trying to enter by any other door?

"The carnal mind, which is enmity, fortifies the soul against God as with bars and doors; averts it from Him; carries with it a horrid, guilty consciousness, which fills it with eternal despair and rage, and inwraps it in the blackness of darkness for ever."—*Howe.*

Silent, like men in solemn haste,
Girded wayfarers of the waste,
We pass out at the world's wide gate;
Turning our back on all its state,
We press along the narrow road
That leads to life, to bliss, to God."—*Bonar.*

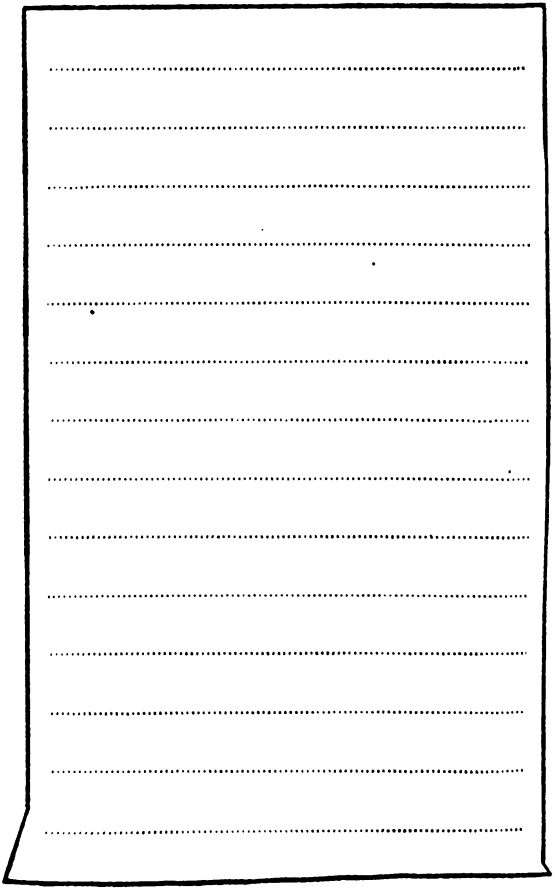
November 10.

God is with us.—Isa. viii. 10.

DO I ever bear in mind that God is always with His people, that there is not a place where He is not? Do I realize that God is with us, on our side, to take our part, and fight for us against our enemies? Therefore, "who can be against us?" Does the knowledge of this omnipresence act as a safeguard in the hour of temptation, keeping me from doing those things which are displeasing to God?

"Christians might avoid much trouble and inconvenience if they would only believe what they profess—that God is able to make them happy without anything else. They imagine that were such a dear friend to die, such a blessing to be removed, they must be miserable. God has been depriving me of one blessing after another; but, as each was removed, He has come in and filled up its place."

"Thy children shall not faint or fear,
Sustained by this delightful thought—
Since Thou, their God, art everywhere,
They cannot be where Thou art not."



November 11.

Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.—MATT. vii. 14.

DO I remember that the entrance-gate to heaven is a narrow one; that we must become as little children; high thoughts must be cast down? Do I remember that the heavenly path is a narrow one, for there are daily temptations to be resisted, duties to be done painful to flesh and blood? Do I realize to what this narrow way leads? Does it not lead to life, and to present comfort in God's favour, which is the life of the soul; and finally to eternal rest in heaven? Is not this a help by the way?

"The Saviour has, indeed, said that the way to eternal life is narrow. He has never told us, however, that it is a thorny road. It is unbelief, and not faith in God, that has represented it as such a road."

"Girt with the love of God on every side,
Breathing that love as heaven's own healing air,
I work or wait, still following my Guide,
Braving each foe, escaping every snare."—*Bonar.*

November 12.

Vain man would be wise.—JOB xi. 12.

DO I remember that those who would come to Christ must cast away all high and self-exalting thoughts, and must become as little children, willing to be taught and to learn? When I meet with matters which I cannot understand, do I remember that, as God is infinite and I am finite, it is not in accordance with human reason to imagine that I should be as wise as Deity? Do I feel that though we can know but little of God, yet He knows us perfectly?

"It once occurred to me that most of my sufferings and sorrows were occasioned by my unwillingness to be the nothing that I am, and by a constant striving to be something. I saw if I would but cease struggling, and be content to be anything or nothing, as God pleases, I might be happy."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And soon will make it plain."—*Cowper.*

November 13.

Lord, that our eyes may be opened.—MATT. xx. 33.

DO I realize that none follow Christ blindfold? He first by His grace opens men's eyes, and so draws their hearts after Him. Have my eyes been opened to a sense of my sinful and lost state? Have my eyes been opened to see the preciousness of my Saviour? Do I pray earnestly for the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit?

"Conscience is like the awful lightning flash, revealing in one fearful instant the secrets of the deepest darkness, though anxiously concealed in the darkened room. Yet too frequently the illumination is but for a moment; the heart returns again to the same darkness as before."

"The understanding is the eye of the mind. By nature it is closed, and the soul is darkness. The Spirit opens it, truth clears it, and the Lord Jesus Christ fills it."

"Shepherd of Thy blood-bought sheep,
Teach the hardened soul to weep;
Let the blind have eyes to see—
See their sins, and look to Thee."

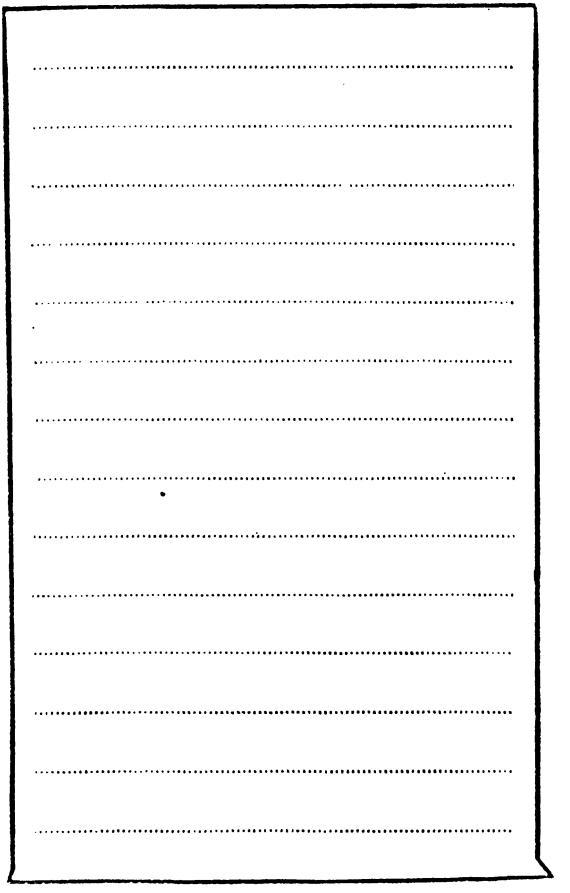
November 14.

The tree is known by his fruit.—MATT. xii. 33.

DO I not feel that the heart is the treasury, the words are the things brought out of that treasury, and from thence characters may be drawn and may be judged? Do I realize that the complete Christian in *this* bears the image of God, that he both *is good* and *does good?* Am I a fruit-bearer in the Lord's vineyard? Does my life redound to the honour and glory of the Lord? Is my fruit to myself, or to God?

"The hearts of believers are like gardens, wherein there are not only flowers, but weeds also; and as the former must be cherished, so the latter must be nipped. If nothing but showers of promises fell upon the heart, though they tend to the nourishing of the graces, yet the weeds of corruption would grow apace, and in the end choke them, unless they were nipped by the severity of threatenings."—*Owen.*

"Christian, wouldst thou fruitful be?
Jesus says, 'Abide in Me.'
From Him all thy fruit is found;
May it to His praise abound!"



November 15.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.
MATT. ix. 13.

DO I feel myself to be one of those lost and helpless sinners whom the Saviour came to call to repentance? Do I realize that Christ's greatest business lies with the greatest sinners; that none are so sunk in sin that His mercy cannot reach them; that Christ came not to call those who consider themselves righteous, but those who feel themselves to be the very chief of sinners?

"Day by day are you busy and painstaking in the attempt to work out a righteousness of your own? Leave that loom, your vows and promises. Gossamer thread. The white linen that robes the saint, the raiment meet for thy soul, and approved by God, was woven upon the cross, and there it was dyed in the blood of the Son of God."—*Guthrie.*

"Not what I am, O Lord, but what Thou art!
That, that alone, can be my soul's true rest;
Thy love, not mine, bids fear and doubt depart,
And stills the tempest of my tossing breast."—*Bonar.*

November 16.

There is none good but One.—MARK x. 18.

DO I acknowledge with becoming humility this sad truth, that there neither does nor ever did live on the earth one good person, out of the vast multitudes created by the bountiful Creator? Do I therefore cling with my whole heart and soul to the only good—Jesus the Saviour of the lost? Am I looking to Him alone for righteousness, feeling that I have none of my own? Do I seek to clothe my naked soul with the ample covering of His righteousness?

"Christ is full and sufficient for all His people. He has righteousness enough to cover all their sins; wealth enough to supply all their wants; grace enough to subdue all their lusts; wisdom enough to vanquish all their enemies; virtue enough to cure all their diseases; fulness enough to save them, and that to the utmost."—*Spencer.*

"O Jesus, full of pardoning grace,
More full of grace than I of sin,
Once, once again I seek Thy face—
Open Thine arms and take me in."—*C. Wesley.*

November 17.

What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?—MARK X. 17.

DO I feel anxious to know how I am to get to heaven? Am I asking Jesus to help me to take Him at His simple word, "Come unto Me"? Am I going about seeking to establish some righteousness of my own, or to do some good deed, to take with me to offer to God, as some token of worthiness? Am I willing to consider myself nothing; having no other plea than Jesus' precious blood which was shed for me? Do I count all things but dross, if so be that I may win Christ?

"What must you do? Flee. Whither? To Jesus. Seek shelter there—nothing more to be done; and once in Him you are safe. Hence you so often find Him using this very word, 'Come unto Me;' and complaining, 'Ye will not come unto Me, that ye may have life.'"—*Wilson.*

"Arm me with jealous care,
As in Thy sight to live;
And oh, Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give."

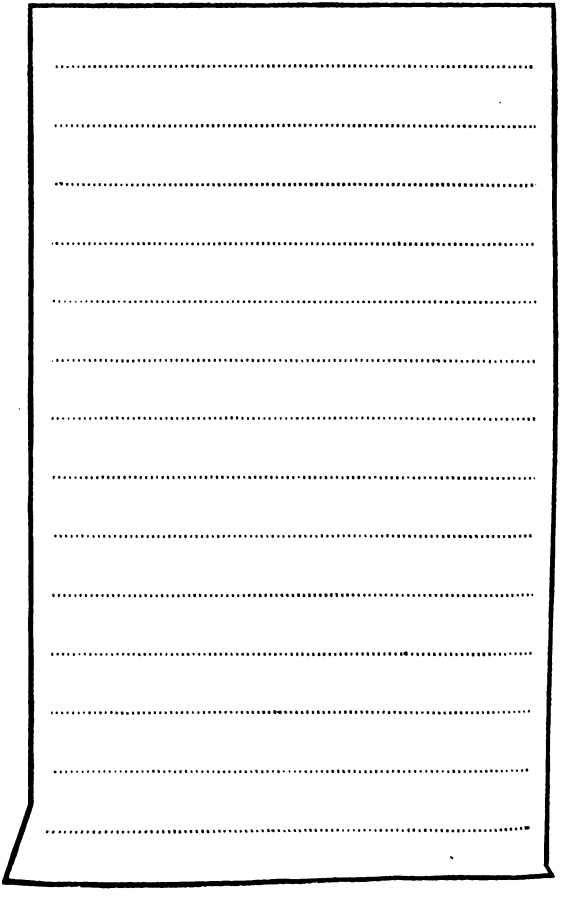
November 18.

Evil communications corrupt good manners.—1 COR. XV. 33.

DO I realize that sin and error are infectious, and that if we would avoid the infection we must keep clear of those who are infected? Do I remember that it is only when in the way of duty that we can expect God's sustaining power; and that if we go wilfully into the path of temptation, we must fall? Do I avoid the dangerous fallacy of doing evil that good may come?

"Bad company is like a nail driven into a post, which after the first and second blow may be drawn out with little difficulty; but being driven up to the head, the pincers can scarcely take hold to draw it out. The Christian who has put aside his religion because he is in worldly company, is like a man who has put off his shoes because he walks among thorns."

"Thou tread'st upon enchanted ground,
Perils and snares beset thee round;
Beware of all, guard every part,
But most, the traitor in thy heart."



November 19.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.
—MATT. vii. 12.

IS this golden rule the foundation of my conduct to and dealings with others? Do I make it a point to yield up my own will for the sake of others? Am I loving and kind to all? Do I deny myself to give others a pleasure? Do I endeavour to reconcile, not to make, differences? Am I silent under reproach?

"If you desire to know whether your love to God be real, and not counterfeit, mark how you love your neighbour. By how much the nearer you approach to your neighbour in love, by so much the nearer are you to God."—*Caussin.*

"Oh, were this sacred maxim ours,
How oft life's thorns would change to flowers,
How many a cloud that round us lowers
Would half its darkness lose!
Love o'er our chequered, changeful way,
Would hold its sweet yet potent sway,
Mighty as noontide's powerful ray,
Yet soft as evening dews."—*Storrs.*

November 20.

The seed is the word of God.—LUKE viii. 11.

HAS the seed been sown in my heart, and taken firm root there? Do I realise that the word of the gospel cannot be a saving word, unless it be accompanied with saving faith? Do I watch against the devil, who would fain have all unbelieving hearers of the word? Do I seek to keep the world and its pleasures in subordination to the one thing needful? Do I realize that the good ground is a heart set free from sinful pollutions; a heart firmly fixed on God and its duty?

"The truths of the gospel are like gold in the soil. Generations walk over it, and know not what treasures are hidden beneath. So centuries of men pass over the Scriptures, and know not what treasures lie under the feet of their interpretations."

"Open now mine eyes of faith,
Open now the Book of God;
Show me here the secret path
Leading to Thy bless'd abode."—*C. Wesley.*

November 21.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job xix. 26.

DO I look forward with joy and comfort to the prospect of my Redeemer standing with His redeemed at the latter day upon the earth, to judge the world? Have I the same supporting confidence in trial as the patriarch Job had? Can I say that Jesus is *my* Redeemer? Is not the thought of a living Redeemer comforting, since He makes perpetual intercession for all His people?

"Christ is the Resurrection; therefore its source and spring, its author and finisher, in a sense in which no other can be. When He emerged from the tomb on the morning of the world's great Sabbath, He brought life and immortality with Him. Look and see the place where the Lord lay, and tremble—but rejoice with trembling."

"Live now the life of faith!
The life divine:
Live *in* and *on* the Ever-living One,
Who bears thee on His heart before the throne—
His life is thine!"—*Bonar.*

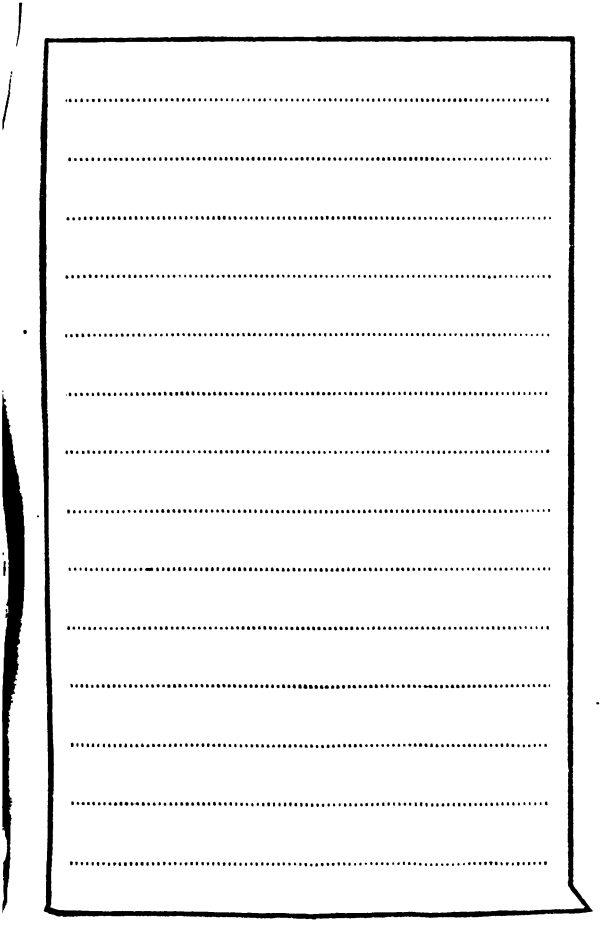
November 22.

This do in remembrance of Me.—Luke xxii. 19.

WITH what feelings do I approach the Lord's table? Do I go as a contrite, humbled sinner, having no goodness, no strength of my own, but desiring a sense of pardon, and the promised strength which is able to make me strong in faith, and strong to resist the Evil One? Do I go to the Lord's table to show my grateful remembrance of His death on the cross; or does a sense of my exceeding sinfulness keep me from frequenting the table of the Lord? My Saviour invited all, without reservation, to partake, therefore why may not I?

"The Holy Communion was appointed to be done *in remembrance of Christ;* to keep fresh in our minds an ancient favour, His dying for us, as well as to remember an absent friend, even Christ interceding for us, in virtue of His death, at God's right hand."—*Henry.*

"Heavenward ever bound I haste,
When Thy table, Lord, is spread;
Heavenly strength on earth I taste,
Feeding on the Living Bread."



November 25.

If God be for us, who can be against us?—Rom. viii. 31.

DO I fully appreciate this comfort, that God being for His people, all earthly machinations against them must fail; that He performs all things for them, and is for them even when He seems to act against them? Do I realize that, while God is for us, and we keep in His love, we may, with a holy boldness, defy all the powers of darkness? Do I remember that let Satan do his worst, yet he is chained; let the world do its worst, it is conquered, principalities and powers are triumphed over, in the cross of Christ?

"Vigorous faith looks through all the terrifying aspects of things, to an invisible, ever-present God; a God who has left nothing to an after-thought in His decrees, nor is ever a moment too late in His actions."—*Ryland.*

"Nothing Thy work suspending,
No foe can make Thee pause,
When Thou, Thine own defending,
Dost undertake their cause."—*Gerhardt.*

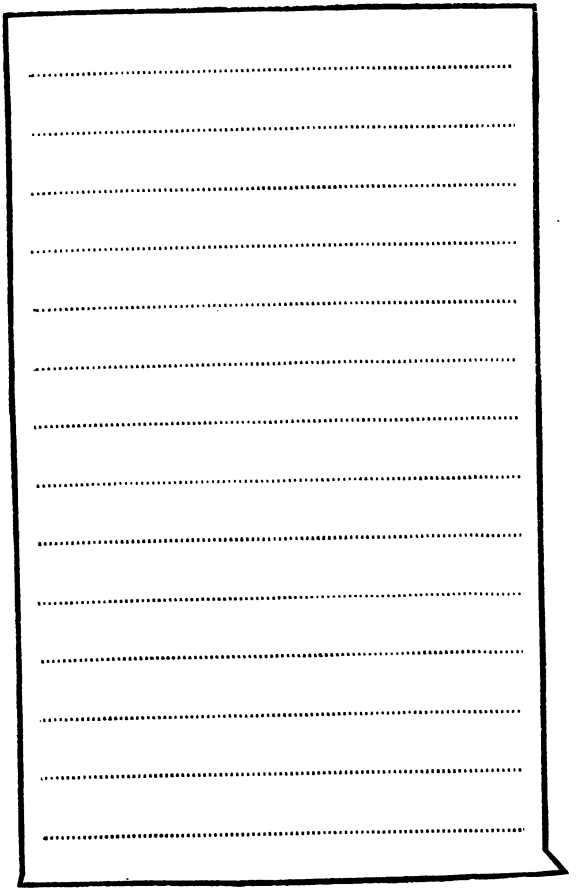
November 26.

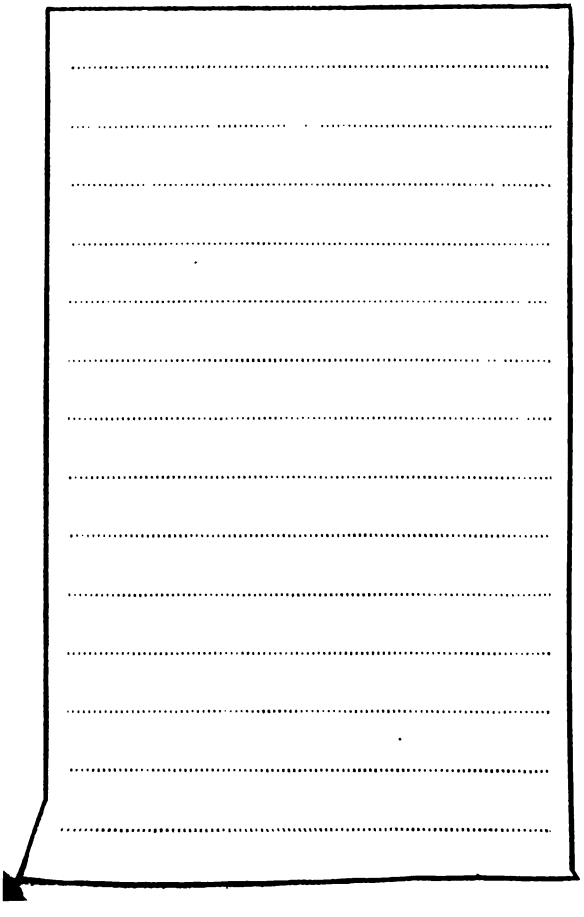
Be not high-minded, but fear.—Rom. xi. 20.

DO I prayerfully watch against being too confident of my own strength and standing? Have I not found that a holy fear is the best preservative against high-mindedness, and that he who thus fears always, is surest to stand fast? What is there to fear? Is it not lest Satan should at any time gain an advantage over us, and we thereby forfeit our right to be called children of God? Do I realize that God never can be false to His word, but that the fear is, lest I should be false to mine?

"All God's children have received God's Spirit, whereby they are made humble, believing, and holy; humble as regards their sins; believing in regard of Christ; and holy in regard of their conscience, and carefulness to keep all God's commandments."

"Jesus, cast a look on me;
Give me sweet simplicity;
Make me poor, and keep me low
Seeking only Thee to know."





November 27.

Let no man deceive himself.—1 Cor. iii. 18.

AM I sensible of my ignorance, earnestly asking God to make me wise unto salvation? Do I distrust my own understanding, not daring to lean upon it for guidance? Do I realize that self-flattery is the next step to self-deceit; and that the way to true wisdom is to sink our opinion of ourselves to a due level, and be willing to be taught of God? Do I pray against self-deception, as being one of the most deadly forms of sin?

"Oh, what a change it would make in the world, if men were brought to a knowledge of themselves! How many would seek to faithful ministers for advice, who now deride them! How many would cry day and night for mercy, and beg for the life of their immortal souls, who now content themselves with formal prayer!"

"Oh, give me, Lord, the tender heart,
That trembles at the approach of sin;
A godly fear of sin impart—
Implant and root it deep within."—*C. Wesley.*

November 28.

He that ploweth should plow in hope.—1 Cor. ix. 10.

AM I plowing for God, plowing in hope, confident in His promise, that His word shall not return to Him void, but shall perform what He wills? Am I apt to look too absorbingly for fruits, and then to feel discouraged if they do not appear? Is there not a want of faith in this inability to leave the results with God? Do I seek with prayer to do my duty faithfully, and leave the consequences with Him, remembering that the future is His?

"Speak for eternity; but, above all, cultivate your own spirit. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear and your heart full of God's Spirit, is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin."—*M'Cheyne.*

"God doth not leave His own;
The night of weeping for a time may last,
Then, tears all past,
His going forth shall as the morning shine,
The sunrise of His favour shall be thine;
God doth not leave His own."

November 29.

I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.—1 Cor. ix. 27.

DO I realize the sad truth, that it is quite possible to point out to others the heavenly road, nay to help them far on it, and yet for the teacher to miss the way, and be a castaway? To avoid this terrible contingency, do I, like the apostle, take much care to keep in subjection the sinful inclinations of the heart; to have a holy fear, lest, in thought, word, or deed, I offend against God?

"When I speak from the inward feelings of my own heart, with respect to inbred corruption, desire after salvation, a sense of my own nothingness, and the Saviour's fulness, the people hear, feel, are edified and strengthened."—*Richmond.*

"Sow truth if thou the truth wouldst reap;
Who sows the false shall reap the vain;
Erect and sound *thy* conscience keep,
From hollow words and deeds refrain."—*Bonar.*

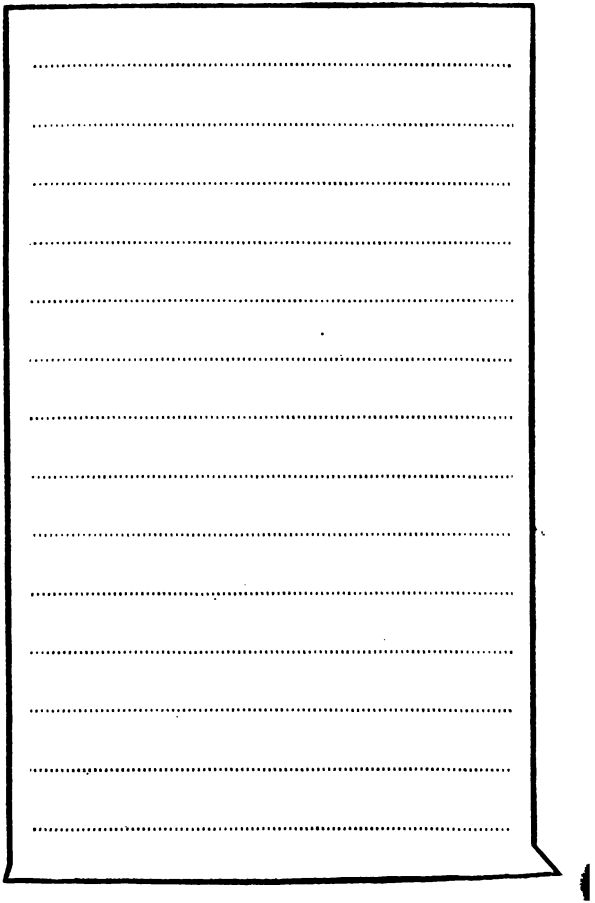
November 30.

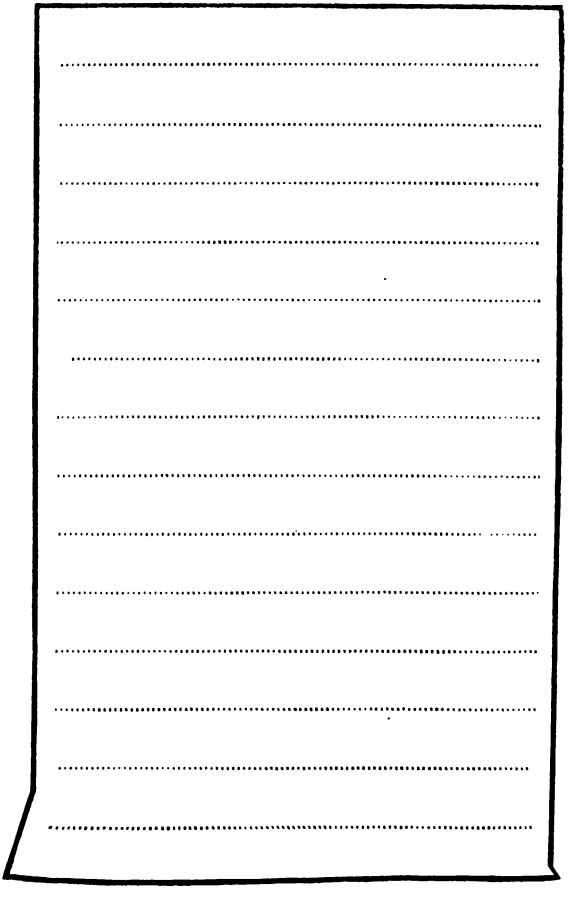
The love of Christ constraineth us.—2 Cor. v. 14.

OUGHT not the Christian's life to be given up to His service who gave up His life for him? Does the love of Christ constrain me to make Him the end of my living and actions—does it not incite me to live and to act under the influence of its greatness? Does the love of Christ constrain me to work for Him ungrudgingly? Is the love of Christ my constraining motive in all the works in which I engage for the good of others?

"The love of Christ constraineth a good man to cry, 'O God, had I the love of all angels and men, it should burn for Thee alone! Had I ten thousand hearts, to Thee should they be consecrated and resigned! Had I the tongues of all mankind, their employment should be to praise and extol Thee, O Thou God of glory!"—*Gotthold.*

"We thank Thee for the grace,
Descending from above,
That overflows our widest guilt—
The Eternal Father's love."—Bonar.





December 1.

As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.
2 Cor. vi. 10.

DO I feel that I am nothing, and have nothing of myself? Do I feel that I have unsearchable riches in Christ, riches that will endure when time shall have passed away, even the promise of eternal life? Is it not comforting to God's poor to know, that though on earth they may not possess houses or lands, silver or gold, yet, being Christ's, they possess an inheritance which the richest of earth's nobles may envy?

"Oh, happy change, when God's people leave all for Him that is worth more than all! Though riches increase, yet they are not changed; their desire is not to be rich unto this world only, but to God; their bodies are below, but their hearts are above; their lives here, but their conversation in heaven."

"Thou on the Lord rely—
So safe shalt thou go on;
Fix on His work thy steadfast eye—
So shall thy work be done."—*Gerhardt.*

December 2.

Live in peace.—2 Cor. xiii. 11.

DO I remember that God is the God of love and peace; that He is the Author of peace and Lover of concord; that He has loved us, and is willing to be at peace with us; that He commands us to love Him, and to love one another, and to be at peace among ourselves? Does it not follow, therefore, that God will be with them who live in love and peace? Have we not His promise that He will love them who love peace; that He will dwell with them here, and they shall dwell with Him for ever? Do I follow the apostolic injunction—not only live in peace, but endeavour also to make peace, and to reconcile differences?

"He that refuses to forgive an injury, breaks the bridge he will one day want to cross himself."—*Beveridge.*

"Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find a harvest-home of light!"—*Bonar.*

December 3.

I am crucified with Christ.—GAL. ii. 20.

AM I, through God's grace, overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil? Am I becoming crucified or dead to the world, but alive to God? Although the Christian, to all outward appearance, lives as others live, yet has he not a higher and nobler principle that supports and actuates him, even faith in Christ, which enables him though living *in* the flesh yet not to live *after* the flesh,—to be a faithful follower of a Divine Master?

"There are who hear with their ears the holy experience of the Christian, 'I am crucified with Christ,' and yet who do not examine if their sins are crucified, their evil passions mortified. Gladly would they have their end like his, but not their way. They would be saints in heaven, but not on earth."

"Oh, crucify this self, that I
No more, but Christ in me may live;
Bid all my vile affections die,
Nor let one hateful sin survive:
In all things nothing may I see,
Nothing desire or seek, but Thee!"

December 4.

Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—EPH. iv. 32.

AM I ready to forgive? Am I slow to give offence, slow to take offence? Do I forget as well as forgive? Does my forgiveness at all resemble that of our gracious God, who when He forgives casts the sin behind His back, and remembers it no more? Have I the principle of love in my heart, the outward expression of which is in affable, courteous, and gentle manner and behaviour?

"You must not only chain down feelings of hatred and put them into the dungeon, but you must call up a choir of sweet singers in their places. Every time your enemy fires a curse, you must fire a blessing; and so you are to bombard back and forth with this kind of artillery."—*Cheever.*

"Oh for the living torch to burn,
Though all around be chill!
Where kindly acts meet no return,
To feed love's fervour still!"—Latrobe.

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December 5.

Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers.—EPH. vi. 6.

DO I serve Christ? In serving Him do I remember that He sees me, and is ever present? Is mine a service of the lips, or of the heart? Do I remember that I must serve God with my whole heart, or not at all—that God will not accept of a divided service? Does the remembrance of the uncertainty of life nerve me to more earnest doing of the will of God, lest the night should come unawares, when none can work?

"The true Christian is like a watch that was going right, but some dust clogs its wheels—directly it is removed the watch will go right again. The hypocrite is like a watch which is so badly made that it stands or goes wrong from its very nature, and the only cure is to give it a new inside."

"Go, labour on; 'tis not for nought;
Thy earthly loss is heavenly gain:
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises—what are men?"—*Bonar.*

December 6.

Rooted and built up in Him.—COL. ii. 7.

DO I realize that the more closely I walk with Christ, the more I shall be rooted or established in the faith; and that a holy life is the best establishment of a good faith? Do I remember that we cannot be *built* up in Christ, unless we are *first rooted* in Him; and that the more firmly we are rooted in Him, the more closely shall we walk in Him? Am I rooted in Christ? Am I united to Him by an active faith, heartily agreeing to His conditions, and growing up in Him in all things?

"There are two different kinds of growth into Christ: a growth *downwards*, when the believer becomes more rooted in his principles, and established in his hold of the covenant; and a growth *upwards*, like the palm and the cedar in the Lord's enclosed garden. But all growth comes from union with Christ."

"'Tis Thy wounds my healing give;
To Thy cross I look and live—
Thou my life; oh, let me be
Rooted grafted, Lord, in Thee."

December 7.

Touch not; taste not; handle not.—Col. ii. 21.

DO I watch lest the world and its syren pleasures should chain my soul downward, and prevent its upward aspirations? Do I strive against the first beginnings of evil in my heart, going to God at once for help, lest from indulgence the thought of sin swell into the commission? Do I avoid places or things which might lead me into sin, causing me to forget God?

"Well, Christian, be not angry if I tell thee that thou dost a more shameful thing thyself by far, if thou, that pretendest to hope for heaven, beest as eager in the pursuit of this world's trash as the poor wretch is, who expects no portion but what God hath left him to pick up in the field of the world. Certainly thy hope is either false, or at best but very little."—*Jewell.*

"Unclasp, O man, the syren hand of Pleasure,
Let the gay folly go;
A few quick years will bring the unwelcome ending;
Then whither dost thou go—
To endless joy, or woe?"

December 8.

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him.—Titus i. 16.

HAVE I received Jesus into my heart, so that my profession of being His follower has a deeper source than mere lip confession? Is it my earnest endeavour to avoid hypocrisy; do I hate it, and strive against it both in myself and in others? Are my words and actions in keeping with my Christian profession?

"There are many who in word and tongue profess to know God, and yet in their lives and conversations deny and reject Him;—their practice is a contradiction to their profession."

"'Tis not enough to say
We're sorry and repent,
Yet still go on from day to day
Just as we always went.

"Repentance is to leave
The sins we loved before,
And show that we in earnest grieve,
By doing so no more."

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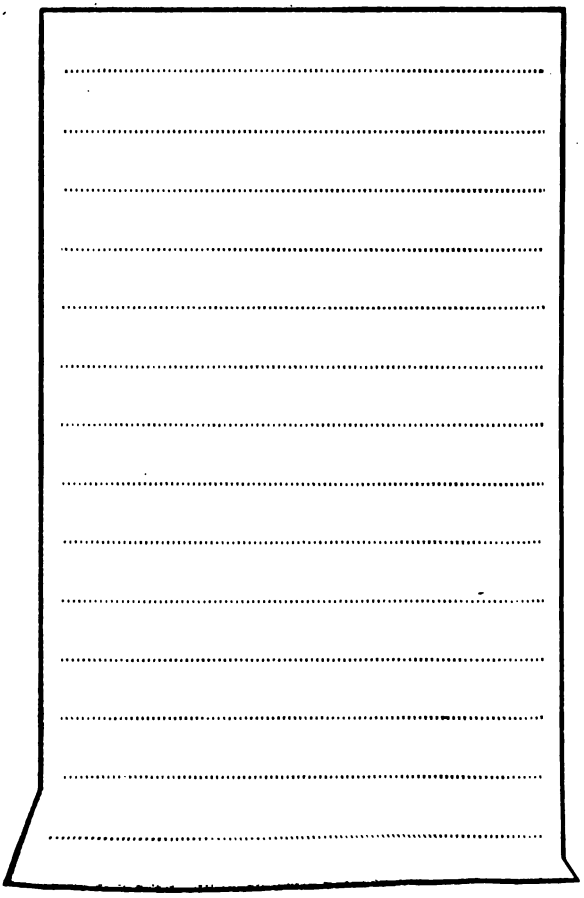


December 9.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.—HEB. ii. 1.

IS it not the great concern of every one who has heard the gospel, to give the most earnest heed to its words of counsel and warning, and to profit by them? Do I endeavour to retain those words in my memory, and to regulate my thoughts, words, and actions by them? Am I on the watch lest these things should slip from a memory more apt to think of wrong than of right?

"It is a just matter of lamentation when souls which have been clad with zeal as with scarlet, constantly forward for the glory of God, fall to such apostasy, as with Demas to embrace the dunghill of this world, and with an avaricious longing to lick up the mud of corruption."—*Mason.*

"Whate'er pursuits my time employ,
One thought shall fill my heart with joy;
That silent, secret thought shall be,
That all my hopes are fixed on Thee—
On Thee, my God, on Thee, on Thee!"

December 10.

God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love.—HEB. vi. 10.

AM I working for God heartily and earnestly? Does my desire to do good proceed from love to God, and a desire to evince my gratitude to Him? Have I love for perishing souls, and do I long that they may be brought into the fold of Christ? When feeling discouraged by seeing little or no fruit, do I remember that God does not, and will not, forget my labours of love?

"Good works and labour, proceeding from love to God, are commendable; and what is done to any in the name of God, shall not go unrewarded. What is done to the saints as such, God takes it as done to Himself."—*Henry.*

"It is Thine own, O Lord,
Who toil while others sleep;
Who sow with loving care
What other hands shall reap;
They lean on Thee entranced,
In calm and perfect rest."—*A. A. Proctor.*

December 11.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.
HEB. x. 23.

DO I hold fast the profession of my faith, embracing all the truths of the gospel, taking fast hold of them, and keeping that hold against all temptation? Do I remember that our spiritual enemies will do all they can to wrest from us our faith and hope, holiness and comfort? Do I keep my hold without doubting, without disputing, without parleying with temptation to unbelief?

"Satan, I confess, rageth; but potent is He that promised to be with us in all such enterprises as we take in hand at His commandment, for the glory of His name, and for the maintenance of His true religion. And therefore the more we feel any contrary power, in the boldness of our God we contemn them, be they kings, emperors, men, angels, or devils."—*Luther.*

"It becometh no man to despair,
But in the teeth of clinched antagonisms
To follow up the noblest till he die."—*Tennyson.*

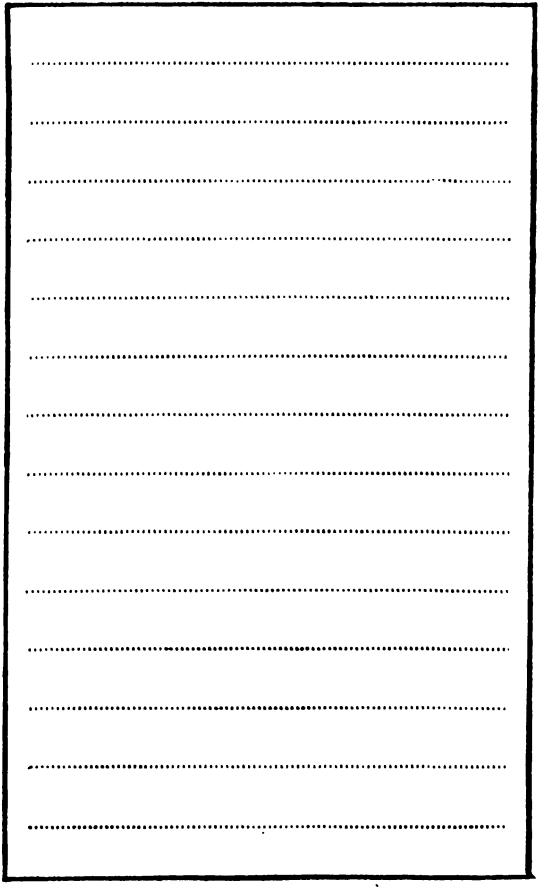
December 12.

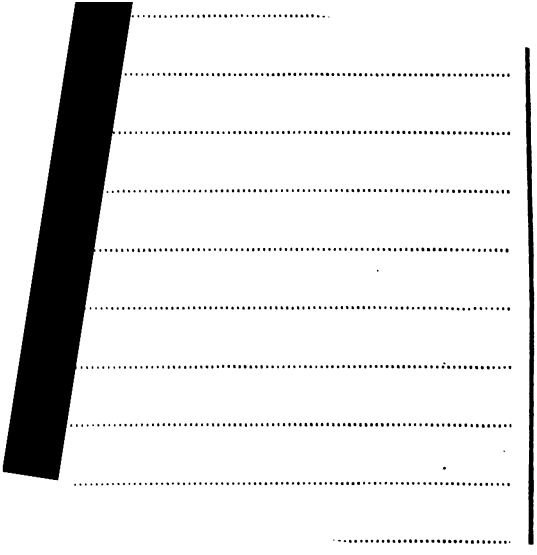
To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.—JAMES iv. 17.

DO I realize that *omissions* are sins which will come into judgment as well as sins of commission; that is, that they who do not the good they know they ought to do, and they who do the evil they ought not to do, will be equally condemned? Do I seek to have my conscience taught according to the Word of God, and then strive faithfully to follow its dictates? Am I striving to practise that which I know to be pleasing in God's sight?

"Let us ponder the path of our feet; and let us take care that when we start on our pilgrimage, like Christian, we leave not our roll of promise behind us. Life is like a multiplication sum, in which a small error in the amount of the multiplicand assumes vast dimensions in the total."

"In vain his eyes salute the skies,
His bended knees the ground;
For God abhors the sacrifice
Where not the heart is found."





December 13.

***Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.*—1 Peter iii. 15.**

AM I able and willing and not ashamed to give an answer for my faith? Do I strive and pray against that fear of man, that dread of ridicule, which brings a snare? Do I feel that if I loved and feared God more, I should fear man less? Do I not realise that the hope and faith of a Christian are defensible, and worthy to be defended against the cavils of the whole world? Am I ashamed of Christ?

"A character should retain always the upright vigour of manliness—not let itself be bent and fixed in any specific form. It should be like an upright elastic tree, which bends, accommodating a little to each wind on every side, but never losing its spring and self-dependent vigour."—*Foster.*

"Oh, speak His glorious name abroad!
Jesus let every tongue confess;
Let every heart and voice accord
The Healer of our souls to bless."

December 14.

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.
2 Peter i. 10.

DO I realize that it requires much diligence to make sure my eternal salvation; that there must be a very close examination of myself, a very narrow search and strict inquiry whether I am converted, my will renewed, and my whole soul changed from its original bent? Will not this diligence go far in keeping in the way of duty, in preserving sound in the faith, and in standing perfect and complete in all the will of God?

"Diligence in business should not hinder fervency in spirit. Like the pure mettled sword, that can bend this way and that way, and turn to its straightness again, that heart is of the right make that can bend to the lowest action of its worldly calling, but then return to its fitness for communion with God."—*Gurnall.*

"He liveth long who liveth well,—
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain."—*Bonar.*

December 15.

***Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.*—1 John iii. 3.**

IF I hope to be with my Saviour hereafter, must I not study the utmost purity from the world, the devil, and the flesh, growing daily in grace and holiness? Would it not be a contradiction to imagine that anything not perfectly pure could be admitted into the inheritance of the saints in light? Do I realize that as we are sanctified by faith, we must be sanctified by hope?

"By shoving and shaking you may move the magnetic needle from its place, but to that it returns the moment it is left to itself. In like manner believers may fall into sin; but no sooner have they leisure for reflection, than they endeavour to mend their ways, and resume a life of godliness."—*Gotthold.*

"Hast thou the love of Christ
The Saviour known?
The love that passeth knowledge, the rich grace
That stooped to poverty and death, to place
Thee on His throne?"—*Bonar.*

December 16.

***Perfect love casteth out fear.*—1 John iv. 18.**

AM I careful to draw the distinction between fear and being afraid, since all God's people must have a high sense of veneration for the majesty of Deity? Is not the fear to be avoided that which arises from a sense of sin unpardoned, resulting in dread? Do I realize that those who love God are perfectly assured of His love?

"The devils, we are told, *believe and tremble.* Our part is to *believe and love.* But it is hard to convince people that nothing short of this can be a true Christian faith. So, because they are something terrified by the thought of God, they fancy they believe, though their hearts are far away from Him."—*Hare.*

"Thee will I love, my strength and tower;
Thee will I love, my joy and crown;
Thee will I love with all my power,
In all Thy works, and Thee alone!
Thee will I love till that pure fire
Fill my whole soul with strong desire."

[redacted]

December 17.

If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.
1 JOHN v. 14.

DO I come to God with all my requests, not deeming anything too small to tell Him? When praying to God, do I make it a point of submitting my will and desires to His most holy will in all things? Do I pray with confidence, since it is the inestimable privilege of God's people to have an audience in prayer?

"Does not this show the fulness of Christ—His gracious promise to hear to the utmost extent every petition of man as taught by the Word and the Spirit of God? As Nature contains a fulness to give to man *all things whatsoever* he needs in life, so Christ possesses a fulness for every purpose of the life of the soul."—*Bate.*

"We ask *Thy peace*, O Lord,
Through storm, and fear, and strife,
To light and guide us on
Through a long struggling life;
While no success or gain
Shall cheer the desperate fight."—*Proctor.*

December 18.

Who shall be able to stand?—REV. vi. 17.

SHALL I be able to stand fearless and with unblenched brow in the great and terrible day of the Lord? Are my sins blotted out of God's book of remembrance? Has my Redeemer's blood been sprinkled on my guilty soul? Have I come to Him who will in no wise cast out? Can I say Yes to these important questions? Then what have I to fear? Why should I not stand? In whose strength am I standing now?

"The only plank between the believer and destruction is *the blood of the incarnate God.* The blood of Jesus did not cause the love of God, but it opened a way by which it could be manifested."—*Evans.*

"Who shall ascend to the holy place,
And stand on the holy hill?
Who shall the boundless realms of space
With shouts of rapture thrill?

"Those who, in humble and holy fear,
With child-like faith and love,
Have served the Lord as their Master here,
Shall praise their Lord above."—*Hawkinson.*

December 19.

When thou prayest, enter into thy closet.—MATT. vi. 6.

DO I pray to God as my Father, ready to hear and answer, graciously inclined to pity, help, and succour? Where the eye of man rests not on me, do I pour out my heart before Him, telling Him those secret sins of which the dearest earthly friend knows not, and which even to think of flushes the cheek with shame? Do I ask for pardon for such sins, and for help to walk therein no more? Do I live in a spirit of prayer?

"A man will confess in *general;* but those sins which he would not have his neighbour know for his right hand, which bow him with shame like a wind-stricken bulrush, these he passes over in prayer. Men are willing to be thought sinful in *disposition*, but in *special* acts they are disposed to praise themselves."—*Beecher.*

"Go with pure mind and feeling,
Fling earthly thoughts away,
And in thy chamber kneeling,
Do thou in secret pray."—*Lord Morpeth.*

December 20.

Here a little, there a little.—ISA. xxviii. 10.

AM I on the watch for opportunities to do something for God, though it may be but a little thing that I can do, not despising it, since God does not despise the day of small things, or beginnings? Do I remember that teachers should adapt themselves to the capacities of learners—give them what they most need, can best learn, and a little at a time, with winning manner and loving words?

"That scholar is never like to read well that must needs be in his grammar before he is out of his primer. Cloth that is not wrought well in the loom will never wear well nor long; so that Christian that hath not a thorough work of grace begun deeply in the heart, will never wear well: he will shrink in the wetting, and never do much for God."—*Mead.*

"So let us strive, with earnest soul,
Thy work to do, though small the measure,
Knowing it part of one great whole,
All tending to our highest goal—
Thy perfect will and pleasure."

December 21.

Turn ye unto Me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you.—ZECH. i. 3.

HAVE I forsaken my evil ways, and turned unto the Lord God? Have I turned to God in the way of faith and repentance, duty and obedience, that the Lord may fulfil His promise of turning to me, or receiving me, with favour and mercy, peace and reconciliation? Is it not far better that we should have the Lord of hosts for our friend, than that he should be our enemy?

"The Lord is obliged, when entreaties fail, to add threatenings to commands; for sometimes a black word will drive a soul to Christ when a bright word might not draw it. Fears of hell sometimes make men flee to Jesus. The weary wing made the poor dove fly to the ark; and the thunderbolts of God's justice are only meant to make thee fly to thy Rest."

"See, low before Thy throne of grace
A wretched wanderer mourn;
Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face?
Hast thou not said, Return?"—*A. Steele.*

December 22.

What son is he whom the father chasteneth not?—HEB. xii. 7.

IS not God's chastisement a mark of sonship? Does not this knowledge help me to bear trouble more equably? Does it not sweeten the bitterness of trial to know that if God did not love us He would not try us? Do I realize that if life were unclouded, and the chastening hand of the Lord were never felt, then might we with truth doubt our being God's children?

"As weeds grow fastest in a fat soil, so our corruptions grow and thrive when our outward state is most prosperous; therefore God's love and care of us constrain Him sometimes to use severe discipline, and to cut us short in our temporal enjoyments."—*Bishop Hopkins.*

"Ye good distressed!
Ye noble few, who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up awhile,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deemed evil, is no more;
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded spring encircle all."—THOMSON.

December 23.

The Lord hath bid his guests.—ZEPH. i. 7.

HAVE I accepted the Lord's invitation now, or am I postponing it to some future day? Am I living so now, that I may look forward with joyful assurance to being a partaker of the marriage supper of the Lamb? Have I accepted the services of Jesus my Saviour, whom God has appointed to be a leader, to point the road that leads to the far-off halls of light, where the appointed feast will be held?

"Those that are satisfied with the world for their portion, and seek not for happiness in God, feel no need for accepting of the gospel invitation, and are in no uneasiness about their souls. But those that labour and are heavy laden are invited, and they come."—*Henry.*

"Long have we roamed in want and pain,
Long have we sought Thy rest in vain;
'Wildered in doubt, in darkness lost,
Long have our souls been tempest-tossed:
Low at Thy feet our sins we lay;
Turn not, O Lord, Thy guests away!"—*Heber.*

December 24.

Break up your fallow ground.—HOSEA x. 12.

IS the fallow ground of my heart broken up? Are evil inclinations and sins weakened, which are as weeds and thorns? Am I humbled for my sins? Is my spirit broken and contrite because of them? Do I sow to myself in righteousness, practising good works according to God's law, abounding in works of piety towards God, and of charity towards my neighbour, remembering that every action done is seed sown?

"Shallow soil is like superficial character. You meet with such persons in life. There is nothing deep about them; all they do and all they have is on the surface. When religion comes in contact with persons of this stamp, it shares the fate of everything else. It is taken up in a superficial way."—*Robertson.*

"Ye sons of earth, prepare the plough,
Break up your fallow ground;
The Sower is gone forth to sow,
And scatter blessings round."

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December 25.

I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.—Isa. xliii. 19.

AM I content to follow my heavenly Leader into the wilderness of trial, since He goes before me and with me, and knows every inch of the way? Am I trying to make a way for myself, or through some other than through Christ? Do I pray that the rivers of God's grace may water my weary heart abundantly? Do I seek out God's tried ones, and tell them of the promised presence?

"In general God guides His people by affording them, in answer to prayer, the light of His Holy Spirit, which enables them to understand the Scriptures. In particular cases the Lord opens and shuts for them, breaks down walls of difficulty which obstruct their path, or hedges up their way with thorns; but they are willing to follow whither and when He leads."

"Thy everlasting truth,
Father, Thy ceaseless love,
Sees all Thy children's wants, and knows
What best for each will prove."—*Wesley.*

December 26.

Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read.—Isa. xxxiv. 16.

DO I not only read the Word of God, but also search out of it and into it—turn first to one text and then to another, and thus compare them together? Have I not found that an abundance of profitable knowledge may be obtained by such a diligent search of the Scriptures, which would otherwise be lost if they were only superficially scanned?

"Human sight will not suffice to make out the inscription on the page of Nature unless we hold it up in a divine light—unless we get near the window of Scripture, where God pours in upon us the radiance of His Spirit. And wheresoever it shines let us follow it, knowing that nowhere but in its illumination can we study the spiritual meanings of Nature so well."—*Houghton.*

"The hopes Thy holy Word supplies,
Its truths divine, and precepts wise—
In each a heavenly beam I see,
And every beam conducts to Thee."—*Grant.*

December 27.

Their strength is to sit still.—Isa. xxx. 7.

IS it not comforting to know, if God appoints us a trial of sickness and continued ill health, so that we are obliged to sit still, to lie by, that He will give strength—the necessary patience to bear that (to some) peculiarly trying dispensation? Does this not show that the most trivial circumstance connected with His people is not beneath God's notice; that He gives strength for whatever He sends?

"If we sit still in a day of distress, waiting upon God, in humble dependence upon Him, hoping and waiting for the salvation of the Lord, using only lawful and regular methods for our own preservation; this will be the strength of our souls, both for service and suffering, and it will engage divine strength for us."—*Henry.*

"Well may Thy own beloved, who see
In all their lot their Father's pleasure,
Bear loss of all they love save Thee,
Their living, everlasting Treasure."—*Waring.*

December 28.

They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.—Dan. xii. 3.

AM I taking care lest my crown of rejoicing should be a starless one? Have I been instrumental in the conversion of one soul? Have I ever gone out of my way to give a word of warning or advice to a perishing sinner? Do I remember that the more thoroughly and earnestly we do God's work on earth, the greater will be our reward and meed of glory in the world to come?

"These words import that they who have been the great lights of the world, who have instructed others by their doctrine, and confirmed them in the truth by their sufferings and example, shall have an eminently glorious reward at the day of judgment."—*Bishop Lowth.*

"Pass on from strength to strength,
Faint not nor yield;
With girded loins press on, the goal is near;
With ready sword fight God's great battle here—
Win thou the field!"—Bonar.

December 29.

Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.
MATT. vi. 3.

WHEN I give, it is because it is pleasing to my Father, who has done so much for me, as well as from a feeling of loving sympathy for those who may not have the same blessings that are in my lot? Do I watch against self-conceit, which is only another kind of pride, of which ostentation in the giving of alms is a development most offensive to the Saviour?

"My God, grant that my bounty may be a clear and transparent river, flowing from pure charity, and uncontaminated by self-love, ambition, or interest. And what are the paltry gifts for which my neighbour forgets to thank me, compared with blessings for which I have so often forgotten to thank Thee?"—*Gotthold.*

"Wealth is the conjurer's devil,
Whom when he thinks he hath, the devil hath him.
Gold thou mayst safely touch, but if it stick
Unto thy hands, it woundeth to the quick."—*G. Herbert.*

December 30.

Who also sat at Jesus' feet.—LUKE x. 39.

DO I sit at Jesus' feet, waiting to be taught? Have I given myself up to the guidance of my Saviour? Have I chosen that good part—that part with Christ which is necessary for my soul's safety? Do I allow the world to have an undue influence over me, thereby weakening the hold which religion ought to have on my heart and feelings? Am I humble and teachable?

"Our sitting at Christ's feet when we hear His word, signifies a readiness to receive His word, and a submission and entire resignation of ourselves to the guidance of it. We must either sit at Christ's feet, or be made His footstool; but if we sit with Him at His feet now, we shall sit with Him on His throne shortly."—*Henry.*

"In suffering be Thy love my peace;
In weakness be Thy love my power;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Jesus, in that important hour,
In death as life, be Thou my Guide,
And save me, who for me hast died!"

December 31.

I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.—MATT. xii. 36.

DO I ever keep before me the solemn truth that God takes notice of every word we say—even that which we think too trivial for notice? Do I realize that idle words—words which are of no use, and of a light, trifling nature—are the same with that foolish talking and jesting which are forbidden? (Eph. v. 4.)

"Though the trifler does not record his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They find their indelible place in that book of remembrance with which human hand cannot tamper, and from which no erasure save one can blot them. They are noted in the memory of God."

"Like the rivers, time is gliding,
Brightest hours have no abiding;
Use the golden moments well:
Life is wasting,
Death is hasting;—
Death consigns to heaven or hell."

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